Commentary

Volume Sixty-nine, Number One, January 1980

LIBERALISM & THE JEWS

A SYMPOSIUM

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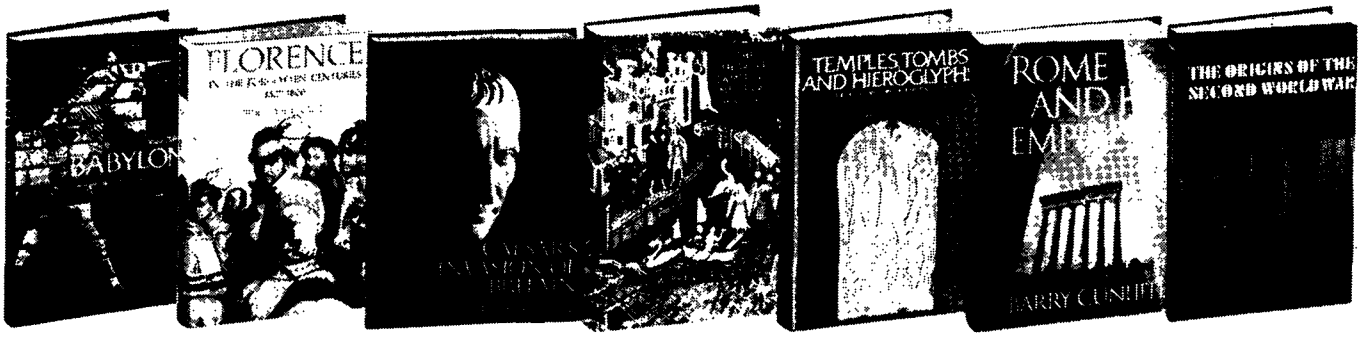

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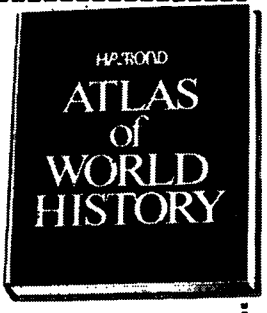

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Commentary

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Letters from Readers

The Lawyers

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

A significant omission from Franklin Hunt's article ["The Lawyers' War Against Democracy," October 1979], the mention of which would have made his case stronger, is the notion of the "new property" put forth by Charles Reich of Yale. Reich wrote about potential property rights in government largesse long before any of the professors mentioned by Mr. Hunt.

Because of Mr. Hunt's concluding comments about a "new generation of lawyers," the Reich reasoning is particularly noteworthy. It was Reich, after all, who later created the concept of the "Greening of America."

As a lawyer concerned about the ideas Reich and related elitists have used to "con" us, I think we ought to know and note the relationship among the new property, the new consciousness, and the New Class.

JOEL B. FREEDMAN
Long Beach, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I am among those who believe that the *Lochner* decision rests on sound constitutional doctrine. I believe, as do many legal scholars and political theorists, that due process of law cannot be merely procedural, if there is to be a connection between law and justice. Furthermore, as is argued very well by William Letwin in his contribution to *Liberty and the Rule of Law: Essays on F. A. Hayek* (edited by Robert Cunningham, Texas A & M University Press, 1979), Justice Holmes's quip about Herbert Spencer was entirely gratuitous. Not laissez-faire *per se*, as an economic doctrine, but the right to free association and freedom of contract, is very much a part of the Constitution, through the First, Ninth, and Fourteenth Amendments at least.

What is wrong with the current welfare-rights approach has nothing to do with due process. It has to do with very bad moral philosophy and political theory. John Rawls and the too many who follow him (in philosophy and in legal theory) are convinced that justice requires redistribution of wealth simply on the grounds that some get richer than others, never mind how this happens. This view rests, this time around (for it has been put forth in all sorts of philosophical and theological garb throughout human history), on the combination of a passive view of human nature and the "moral intuitions" of Rawls and those who agree with him. The result is an incredibly laborious thesis that begs all the crucial questions of morality and politics.

Franklin Hunt is right that what the welfare-rights theorists are doing is against democracy, but then so is the Constitution by having various more or less precise and firmly embedded principles of justice embodied within it in addition to provisions for the use of democratic methods for some purposes. I suggest that we worry less about the danger to democracy (which cannot persist by itself anyway, without undemocratically cherished principles of justice) than about the sort of "justice" those advocating the welfare-rights moral and political theories are trying to sell to the courts and the American public.

TIBOR MACHAN
University of California
Santa Barbara, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Franklin Hunt's article deals with a very serious subject. Stated simply, it is: who is going to rule this country, the majority of its citizens or five concurring Justices of the Supreme Court? It is an old question and, because it has been around so long, many people find it boring. Too bad! For each successive year the Court grows bolder as it seeks to impress its own particular social philosophy upon the nation.

The conservatives, more or less, never really believed in democracy. They were quite openly elitist, provided of course the elite was chosen from their own ranks. The liberals used to be in the vanguard of those seeking to extend democracy. Not today; although many still preach majority rule, when pressed, they add the proviso that the majority must agree with them.

Mr. Hunt treats this profound question of who is to rule in an almost superficial way by including lawyers in his indictment of those attacking democracy. But lawyers have no power, whereas judges have great power. . . .

The point is not, as Mr. Hunt would have us believe, that three citizens such as Karst, Tribe, and Michelman who hold law degrees are asking for the moon but that

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the Supreme Court may decide to give it to them. The exercise of such power is judicial tyranny, nothing less. A national debate on the question of how to control the Court, whether it raises issues of the election of the Justices of the Supreme Court or of submitting them to the process of recall, should not be further delayed.

MERWIN AUSLANDER
Laguna Hills, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I take as an intended compliment Franklin Hunt's reference to me, among others, as offering a "detailed analysis" of the "appalling effects of court interventions on social policy." While I am reluctant to spurn the kindnesses of strangers, the reference does not fit. In writing about judicial intervention with respect to questions as diverse as school desegregation and the denial of pregnancy benefits, I have focused on the limits of self-contained legalism, inattentive to contextual reality. Because these questions are at once legal and political in nature, crafting appropriate remedies necessarily taxes the capacities of the judiciary. That perspective suggests altered roles for judges—and, for that matter, for legislators and regulators. If it does not routinely celebrate the handiwork of the judges, neither does it find it appalling.

Of greater moment, Mr. Hunt's analysis does not begin to comprehend the role of courts in contemporary social policy. There are problems aplenty with the judicialization of questions once viewed as exclusively political, but they are not the problems he poses. The article takes out after "the professors" (a tactic I hoped had vanished with the McCarthy era), accusing them of denigrating democratic institutions and preferring a judicially imposed egalitarian utopia. This critique oversimplifies and misdescribes, erecting straw men only to demolish them; it also misunderstands the function of legal scholarship. In attempting to construct a constitutional theory which gives greater prominence to equality, Professors Michelman, Karst, Horowitz, and Tribe—the prime sinners in Mr. Hunt's litany—are engaging in just that sort of speculation concerning the nature of law (and democracy) which keeps the field intellectually alive. That speculation is, to be sure, intended to influence the judges, but not in the direct and mechanical way Mr. Hunt posits. Law-review essays and court decisions are best appreciated as elements of a conversation between the deciders and the critics, guessers and second-guessers. That conversation is, designedly, cacophonous; the academics Mr. Hunt identifies speak with greater diversity than he indicates, and their more conservative counterparts have had at least equal say in these matters. There is no threat to the republic here, unless intellectual ferment is viewed as threatening, and no challenge to democracy, unless by democracy one has in mind a New England town meeting of 210 million citizens—and no lawyers.

Mr. Hunt does not provide citations for the articles which he criticizes. With good reason: most of the work to which he refers was written nearly a decade ago. In the intervening period, the judiciary has been decidedly unwilling to expand the scope and meaning of equality. The record is replete with instances in which the courts, especially the Supreme Court, have refused to honor claims premised on unequal treatment of social injustice. The Justices have, for example, refused to scrutinize sex-based differences in treatment by government with the same attentiveness that they have historically applied to race; declined to rework the financing of public schooling to secure greater equality; and refused to order public support for indigent women's abortions. It is a bit late to refight the battles of the late 1960's, but that is just what Mr. Hunt seems determined to do.

The more consequential developments of the intervening years concern the expanded role of the courts—particularly the lower courts—in cases involving structural changes in the workings of public institutions. Schools, prisons, institutions for the mentally ill and mentally retarded: these have been the subject of challenges which focus not on a narrowly defined wrong but more generally on the regime of treatment or service. The claims have constitutional roots—the deprivation of the liberty of the mentally ill, for instance, or discrimination against minority students—but

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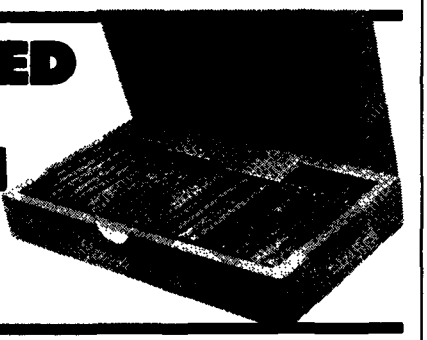

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remedying them, it is argued, necessarily entails broader reform. Such suits pose two quite distinct kinds of questions: Do the courts have the competency to resolve the problems they are confronted with (or, better, are the judges more or less competent than their legislative and bureaucratic counterparts)? Is it legitimate for the judiciary to undertake the task? These questions have been closely studied by social scientists such as Nathan Glazer and Donald Horowitz, as well as by such legal scholars as Abram Chayes, Colin Diver, Melvin Eisenberg, Owen Fiss, and Paul Mishkin. The stuff of vital contemporary debate lies here—not with a rehearsal of squabbles over equality doctrine or a critique of the professoriate.

DAVID L. KIRP
University of California
Berkeley, California

FRANKLIN HUNT writes:

I find much to agree and to disagree with in the letters of Messrs. Freedman, Machan, Auslander, and Kirp.

I do not believe Charles A. Reich's theory of the "new property" is as apt to my argument as Joel B. Freedman does, which is why I did not mention it. Reich argued that the law should protect a person's reasonable expectation that he will continue to receive, once it has been bestowed, "government largesse," whether it is in the form of welfare payments, professional licenses, business subsidies, government contracts, or government jobs. Reich's notion was influential and its argument was reflected in cases like *Goldberg* v. *Kelly* that prohibited the withdrawal of public assistance without a hearing. The notion is, however, essentially different from, and far more modest than, the argument of Professors Michelman, Tribe, and Karst that everyone has an affirmative *constitutional* right to receive a certain minimum of government largesse even if it had not previously been granted. While Reich made some tentative suggestions about the need for affirmative rights to unemployment compensation, public assistance, and old-age insurance, he did not suggest that the Constitution guaranteed them.

I frankly do not know the relationship among the new property, the new consciousness, and the New Class, but I am skeptical that there is any. I do not believe Reich's new consciousness has been very influential, and the objectionable judicial interventions in public affairs have been the work of veteran legal warriors too old to have been much influenced by it. Perhaps Mr. Freedman is correct, however, to suggest that it may be a different story with the "new generation of lawyers."

I personally find Tibor Machan's strictures upon current moral philosophy and political theory, including the theories of John Rawls, to be quite congenial. I also agree that rights of free association and freedom of contract are important principles. Nevertheless, I cannot agree with the apparent implication of Mr. Machan's proposition that the due process contemplated by the Constitution "cannot be merely procedural, if there is to be a connection between law and justice." Why must there be such a connection in the *Constitution*? Whatever comfort Mr. Machan takes from William Letwin's argument about Justice Holmes and Herbert Spencer, surely Holmes was correct that in matters of economic and social policy the Constitution does not create such a connection. We have to take our chances with the imperfect "justice" that the majority, after listening to the arguments over moral philosophy, chooses from time to time.

No doubt democracy is a risky business. We have all had feelings like those of a Texas friend who wrote ten or twelve years ago that he was heading for Vietnam to avoid the public panic and chaos occasioned by the opening of the state legislature. Nevertheless, I would rather live with a system of minimum welfare rights than have the courts invalidate such system (or replace it with another) on the basis of some moral theory Mr. Machan and I like better.

I agree with Merwin Auslander that we are dealing with the serious question of whether the country is to be run by the electorate or "five concurring Justices of the Supreme Court" (what Ralph Winter has aptly called a *junta* of from five to nine). I also agree, roughly, with Mr. Auslander's remarks about

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conservatives and liberals. I am more skeptical that in seeking "to impress its own particular social philosophy upon the nation," the Supreme Court "grows bolder" every year, but I suppose it is arguable.

Mr. Auslander is also right that the source of the problem I discussed is the extraordinary power of the Supreme Court, the power "for sure," as John Hart Ely says, to "get away with" almost any kind of political or social intervention it chooses. It is this power that attracts so many who want to use it to impose their favorite policies on "resistant" electorates. But I do not believe the Court's power is the only thing worth talking about. Mr. Auslander may believe that a national debate on controlling the Supreme Court is in the offing, but I do not. The public knows, after all, that the Supreme Court's power has not always been and does not have to be abused. The public may conclude that public attention to the constitutional lawmaking process and the frequently disastrous consequences of overly active courts may help induce the Supreme Court to confine itself to its proper function, while devices like the election and recall of Justices might make matters worse by making the Court even more political.

In contrast to Mr. Auslander, who believes that Professors Michelman, Tribe, and Karst are merely making the lawyers' usual outrageous demands for the moon, David L. Kirp believes they are only making contributions to legal scholarship. Mr. Kirp does not claim that I have misrepresented their views or that such views, if implemented, would not be as disruptive as I maintain. He seems to say only that we need not worry because the arguments are mostly out of date by now ("nearly a decade" old), and in any case were merely harmless speculations on the nature of law. The first proposition is wrong and the second is disingenuous.

The publication dates of the articles and books in question are as follows: Karst and Horowitz, 1967; Michelman, 1969, 1973, 1977; Karst, 1977; Tribe, 1973, 1977, 1978. The professors have not been deterred by the adverse decisions Kirp refers to (and which I alluded to in my article), and, in fact, they advanced their total-state theories only in their 1977 and 1978 efforts. If the professors would give up their "battles" and "squabbles over equality doctrine," I would be happy to do likewise.

It is too late in the day for Mr. Kirp to claim that constitutional legal scholarship is simply "speculation concerning the nature of law (and democracy)" only indirectly intended to influence judges. For many, this is clearly true, but not for all. Mr. Kirp's description of such scholarship as "a conversation between the deciders and the critics, guessers and second-guessers," is quite accurate, and such a scholarship would be as beneficial to constitutional law as it is to more mundane subjects like creditors' rights or the securities laws, if it were confined to those matters that are proper for the judiciary to deal with. Those conservatives (if they are legal and not just political conservatives) Mr. Kirp says get equal time in his conversation spend most of it making exactly this point. Legal warriors like Michelman, Tribe, and Karst do not disguise their actual purposes or how their campaigns work. Several prominent New York lawyers (Francis T.P. Plimpton, Simon H. Rifkind, Samuel I. Rosenman, Orville H. Schell, Jr., and Cyrus R. Vance), for example, explained in the New York *Times* that the Supreme Court decision, *Furman* v. *Georgia*, outlawing capital punishment "did not just happen." It was the result of a "litigation program" developed by the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund and lasting many years which was supported by scholars and scores of lawyers around the country.

Mr. Kirp complains that my "analysis does not begin to comprehend the role of courts in contemporary social policy," and of course he is correct since it was intended instead to comprehend only one aspect of such a role: the efforts of those who try to get the courts to impose economic and social policies the electorates reject. Mr. Kirp is not interested in this aspect of the Court's role, however, and seems to think it unsporting to mention it. He would rather talk about how social policy once undertaken is best pursued; whether judges are "more or less competent than their legislative and bureaucratic counterparts" to accomplish structural changes in public institutions, like schools and prisons; and whether it is legitimate for them to try to do so. These are indeed interesting questions and Mr. Kirp calls attention to a growing literature on the subject. Mr. Kirp, with his great confidence in legal scholars, does not seem to notice, however, that this literature raises the question of whether yet a new effort is not under way to outmaneuver democracy, this time by substituting politicized courts for democratic politics. The issue cannot be treated here in detail but some doubts arise. Where, for example, do the courts get the authority to remedy narrowly defined wrongs with broad reforms of the general "regime of treatment or service"? Why should we, as Abram Chayes suggests, convert courts into "mini-legislatures" directing negotiations by the parties to produce "democratically negotiated" court orders resembling laws that legislatures adopt after political give-and-take? Instead of using Chayes's public-law model of litigation or Melvin Eisenberg's "consultative process," why don't we leave democratic settlements to democratic institutions?

I did intend my reference to Mr. Kirp as a compliment. I suggested that on the basis of his and other analyses of "the appalling effects of court interventions on social policy," courts themselves might become more hesitant in making such interventions because of worry that their actions would be disruptive and ineffective. While I, of course, do not wish to enlist Mr. Kirp in support of views he does not hold, I am surprised at his objection. The burden of his article on school desegregation, for example, was that as the courts pushed their desegregation decisions, their efforts, enforced only by "a system of pains and penalties," were often frustrated, sometimes by underlying social conditions, like white flight, that the courts could not control. As a result, the courts came to be seen, even by themselves, as pursuing ineffective and apparently arbitrary, hit-and-miss interventions. He argues that the courts themselves have begun to suggest that some issues they have been unable to settle should be left to political resolution. It seems rather a quibble for Mr. Kirp to say that the reference to him "does not fit" because, all things considered, he does not find that the effects of such court interventions quite rise to the level of being "appalling."

Mr. Kirp's reference to tactics of the McCarthy era is simply silly.

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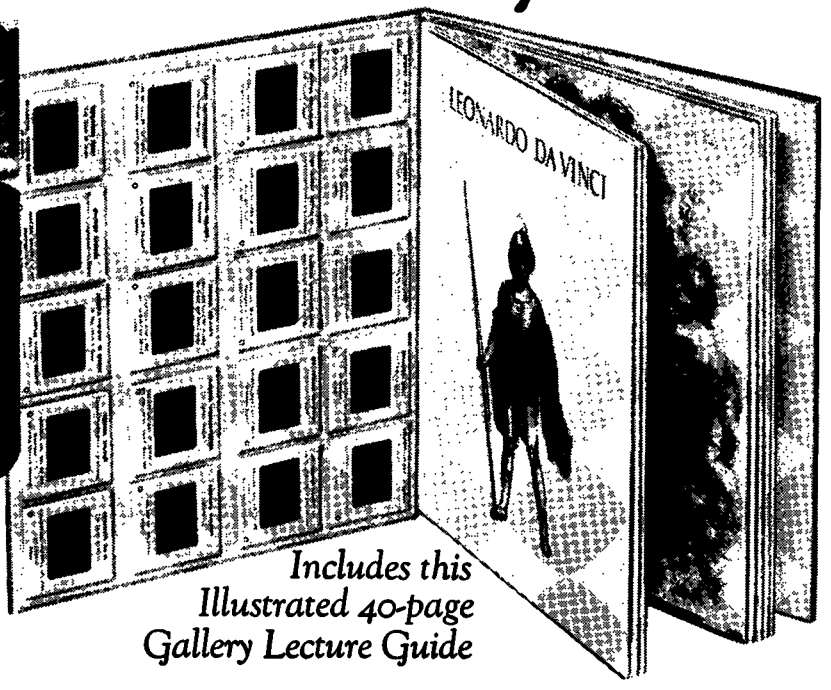

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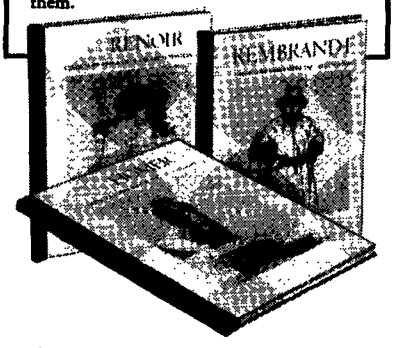

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The Soviet Union

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Richard Pipes is one of this country's top specialists on pre-1917 Russia—on the basis of published work, our top historian on the subject. It is most unfortunate that he does not bring the same standards to bear when he deals with the contemporary Soviet Union, most recently in his review of my book, *How the Soviet Union Is Governed* [Books in Review, October 1979].

The preface to *How the Soviet Union Is Governed* makes it absolutely clear that the views expressed in it are mine alone and that the material drawn from Merle Fainsod's *How Russia Is Ruled* has been rearranged in narrative and chronological form in the historical section at the beginning. To drive this point home, I often quoted Fainsod—as Mr. Pipes put it—"as a third party . . . a scholar with whom Hough debates and whom he even lists in the index as a person with his independent opinions." Mr. Pipes may not like the final result—or the whole enterprise—but he cannot say that I am using Fainsod's authority to support my own views.

Indeed, it is only Mr. Pipes's extremely narrow view of what constitutes Soviet history—that is, the history of the labor camps—that leads him to see such a big difference between Fainsod and myself. The basic views of Lenin, the reasons for the Bolshevik victory in 1917, the relationship of Leninism and Stalinism, the importance of Stalin's role in the Secretariat in his victory in the 1920's, the relative importance of factional versus bureaucratic politics in the Stalin and Khrushchev periods, the relationship of Khrushchev to his top associates in the party leadership—all of these have been the subject of serious and prolonged scholarly debate, and on all I take a position quite close to Fainsod's. Mr. Pipes may not like the fact that I find Fainsod's estimate of hundreds of thousands of deaths in the Great Purge better than Conquest's and others' estimates of millions, but it is inexcusable that he claims I omit figures on the deaths when, in fact, I have a whole subsection reviewing the various estimates, including Fainsod's.

The great strength of Mr. Pipes's work on the Czarist period is that he has repeatedly looked at the reality inside Russia instead of simply accepting the clichés of the Russian dissidents of the day. He accepts the statements of today's dissidents as gospel, but one would have hoped that he could be somewhat kinder toward someone who in a sense is trying to follow in his earlier footsteps. At a minimum, he might have mentioned that half of my book consists of an extremely detailed and careful effort to describe the institutions of Soviet policy-making and their interactions. A serious review would have gone beyond general smears about my "sugar-coated" views and outright falsehoods about my comparative judgments on the Soviet Union and the United States; it would have dealt with my (and Fainsod's) views on the major debates about Soviet history and with my views of the working of Soviet institutions. The time has come to try to understand the Soviet system, not simply to react emotionally to it.

JERRY F. HOUGH
Duke University
Durham, North Carolina

RICHARD PIPES writes:

I appreciate Jerry F. Hough's kind remarks about my expertise in pre-1917 Russian history, even though my pleasure is tempered by the suspicion that his praise is meant to set off my alleged incompetence in the field of Soviet politics. (Mr. Hough cites in his book my *Formation of the Soviet Union*, so he ought to be aware that my contribution to post-1917 history is not all labor camps and emotions.)

Mr. Hough protests that the views expressed in *How the Soviet Union Is Governed* are solely his. The unalterable fact, however, is that Fainsod's name appears on the title page as co-author and that the book is billed as a "revised edition" of Fainsod. It is baffling, therefore, that he should deny using Fainsod's authority to support his un-Fainsodian views. And this, after all, was the main thrust of my criticism.

I do not regard forced-labor camps as exhausting the history of the Soviet Union. But they are, in my view, the quintessential manifestation of that coercion on which the Soviet regime rests—much as Auschwitz was the central reality of the complex phenomenon known as National Socialism. Mr. Hough's attempt to minimize the importance of Soviet forced labor is curiously reminiscent of the efforts of some recent "revisionist" historians of Nazism to rehabilitate Hitler by diverting attention from genocide to the more "positive" achievements of his reign. Similar, and just as unconvincing.

The figures which I charged Mr. Hough with omitting were not the totals of victims of the Stalinist terror but only of those victims who belonged to the Communist party.

"Falsehood" is an ugly word which Mr. Hough must have unconsciously added to his vocabulary from long immersion in Soviet writings. He would do well to be rid of it. In fact, what I have said about his "comparative judgments on the Soviet Union and the United States" can be readily verified with reference to the text of his book.

Here are some examples:

1. The "parliamentary leaders" (!) in Lenin's Russia in the exercise of their power resembled the parliamentary leaders in the United States and Great Britain (pp. 122-23).

2. "Direct citizen participation in the Soviet Union has many of the same characteristics found by sophisticated Western political scientists—including major limits on the numbers of people directly involved and their effectiveness . . ." (p. 318).

3. In the Soviet Union citizens do not carry a decisive voice in local politics, but neither do they in the United States (pp. 512-13). Soviet local government probably resembles that of New Haven (p. 512).

4. The role of "interest groups" in the two countries is similar (pp. 534-36).

5. Both the U.S. and USSR know pluralism ("diffusion") in the distribution of power (pp. 545-47).

6. In the realm of human rights, there are parallels in the vague limits imposed on the freedom of speech in both countries and in the way information reaches the citizens (pp. 278-79 and 618).

7. Income distribution in the Soviet Union today is more egalitarian than in the United States (p. 553).

In Mr. Hough's account, the Soviet Union is indeed quite comparable to the United States. Such divergencies as he perceives tend to be either in the Soviet Union's favor or to be balanced by comparable flaws in the American sys-

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tem. Where they appear to be in America's favor, Mr. Hough prefers to abstain from saying so on the alleged grounds of paucity of evidence on the Soviet side.

I do not accept the views (why "clichés"?) of Soviet dissidents as "gospel." They do contribute, however, a most valuable corrective to images of the Soviet Union spun by some Western intellectuals. When educated Soviet citizens who have given proof of their commitment to truth by subjecting themselves to ostracism and persecution give us a view of their country starkly different from that proffered by an American university professor, some inner voice tells me to pay heed.

Why does Mr. Hough think that he "understands" the Soviet Union while I merely emote? I should prefer to believe that we both seek to understand. But I also believe that his effort in this direction is seriously hampered by a lack of imagination which he mistakes for scientific impartiality. It causes him to fit exotic foreign phenomena into the ready forms of sociopolitical "models" and to match everything to its (apparent) American equivalent. His pragmatism and "reasonableness" place outside the range of his vision all those aspects of the Soviet experience that really matter. A sentence like the following in his book, "The industrialization-collectivization program was not achieved without increasing resort to compulsion" (p. 166), may appear, by its understatement, impeccably unemotional and "scientific." But when we consider how it glides over a tragedy involving tens of millions of people, we must judge it to be merely inhuman and therefore, ultimately, uncomprehending.

The Socialist International

To the Editor of Commentary:

Carl Gershman's "The Socialists and the PLO" [October 1979] is one of those rare essays that masterfully marshals all the facts and arguments in support of its thesis—the despicable role of the leaders of the Socialist International in support of the terrorist PLO—and then it transcends that issue to reach its wider implications and consequences—to see the PLO affair as a paradigm of the Socialist International in the process of transformation from a movement aligned with the West in defense of democracy against Communist totalitarianism to one of "neutrality" in East-West relations and uncritical support of the radical parties of the Third World, thus abandoning its democratic essence.

Reading Mr. Gershman's searing indictment, one is tempted to carry it one step further. Can this be seen also as a remarkable victory for Moscow on the issue of Eurocommunism? The Moscow-ordered split in the Socialist-Communist electoral alliance, which brought about its defeat in the 1978 French elections, marked the death knell of Eurocommunism as a movement within the European Communist parties. . . . Instead, Moscow has succeeded in transplanting a variety of Eurocommunism within the Socialist International, where it ideally serves Moscow's purpose, while preserving Communist organizational and ideological solidarity. If this is so, Moscow has won a double victory.

Elias M. Schwarzbart
New York City

Soviet Jewry

To the Editor of Commentary:

I was somewhat puzzled by several of Stephen J. Whitfield's remarks in his review of my book, *The American Movement to Aid Soviet Jews* [Books in Review, September 1979]. He observes that the "text is simply too episodic to be violated by an idea that is developed, qualified, and sustained." The major theoretical concept underlying the book, as discussed in the introduction, is an analysis of the role of the nonviolent international pressure group. The book concludes that, generally, international pressure groups which have aimed at national liberation, such as the Irish and Zionist movements, have attained greater success than those attempting to safeguard the "human rights" of their compatriots—the most glaring example of this failure remains the Holocaust. Nonetheless, the Soviet Jewry movement, a "human-rights" movement, has achieved some success; but even this success is very

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limited. True, 30,000 Jews emigrated in 1978, but even this represents only 1 per cent of the estimated Soviet-Jewish population—at the present rate, even if all Soviet Jews should desire to emigrate, the process will last 100 years. Overall, the movement has not altered the basic Soviet desire to eradicate Judaism within its borders, mostly by assimilation and partially by emigration. (Parenthetically, I am not sure that a historical and analytical work need be "violated by an idea that is developed, qualified, and sustained.")

Secondly, I do not necessarily criticize tension in itself. The opening phrases of the book state specifically that "Movements rarely attain perfect harmony; each segment may have different tactics. Disunion need not be advantageous, however, for homogeneous movements often suffer greater lethargy than their heterogeneous cousins; internal tension sometimes spurs activity." I further state that "Clearly, a movement's success or failure does not depend on how unified its American wing is; internal conflict wracked all four movements, particularly the Irish and Zionist, yet these succeeded. . . . Conflict seems to be endemic; perhaps competition stirs the interest groups to greater activism."

In fact, the main practical theme of the book, stated on page 1, is that "Dissension within the Soviet Jewry movement, caused by activist demands, has prodded the sluggish establishment to increasing exertion." Basically, the American Jewish "establishment," as I repeatedly demonstrate, proved extremely reluctant to undertake decisive action to aid Soviet Jews unless pressured and shamed to do so through "pitiless publicity" by the activists. These activists, generally unpaid volunteers, often worked tirelessly for the cause. Furthermore, the state of Israel attempted, in many instances, to crush the activist movement. . . . (This strange ambivalence which characterizes Israeli policy toward Soviet Jewry, i.e., declarations of support contrasted with lethargic activity, also characterizes the Israeli attitude toward the Falashas.)

Finally, as to Mr. Whitfield's assertion that the Soviet Jewry movement demonstrates Jewish idealism, I do not differ on this concept; for all their faults, American Jews are most charitable and do attempt to aid their compatriots in distress. I do differ in his assessment of this as unique to Jews, however. The last chapter demonstrates that other groups have also supported their compatriots abroad. The difference, if there be such, is one of degree and of visibility, rather than of kind.

WILLIAM ORBACH
University of Louisville
Louisville, Kentucky

STEPHEN J. WHITFIELD writes:

William Orbach's letter inadvertently shows why my sense of the importance of a book on the American struggle for Soviet Jewry had to be tempered by acknowledgment of the author's failure to control and interpret his own material adequately. Both his book and now his defense of it reveal—to put it kindly—an unnecessary ambiguity.

Mr. Orbach claims that the conceptual thrust of his study is the "analysis of the role of the international nonviolent pressure group." Whether this constitutes a theory (rather than an aim) even he seems to wonder about by the end of his first paragraph. The comparison with other international movements is offered only in the last of his thirteen chapters. As for the "main practical theme of the book," as he describes the internal dissension of the movement, I still do not see its relation to the patterns of Jewish emigration from Russia. Refuseniks and newcomers to Israel and America have consistently testified to the necessity of Western concern and publicity, but the significance Mr. Orbach attaches to the tactical quarrels of American Jewish activists still seems to me unjustified. He also thinks we disagree about Jewish idealism, whereas my review called the Jews "a peculiar people," not unique. It can be safely generalized that comparisons of human groups are likely to yield differences of degree, not of kind.

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Correction

In Richard Grenier's article, "Tory Wit" [Movies, December 1979], Monty Python was misspelled. We regret the error.—ED.

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Liberalism & the Jews

A Symposium

Recently, the editors of COMMENTARY *addressed the following statement and questions to a group of American Jews of varying political views:*

FOR many years now, it has been taken for granted by most American Jews that their own interests coincided with and could best be represented through the standard liberal agenda. But this axiom might seem to have been called into question by certain recent developments—the widespread support among liberals for quotas, the diminishing enthusiasm among liberals for Israel, the growing sympathy of liberals for the PLO, and the paucity of liberal protest against the anti-Semitism that surfaced in the wake of Andrew Young's resignation.

How seriously have these developments affected your own thinking as a Jew about liberalism? Do they warrant a reconsideration by the Jewish community in general of its traditional commitment to liberalism? Do you expect such a reconsideration to take place? If so, is it likely to result in a significant movement away from the Democratic party in 1980?

The responses—fifty-two in all—appear below in alphabetical order.

Morris B. Abram: It irks me that many who called me liberal in Georgia, particularly during my bitter fourteen-year battle for the principle of one man/one vote against the racially motivated county-unit voting system, now say that I have changed my colors. Some charge that this is related to my ties to a Jewish community which has strayed from its liberal moorings.

I have not changed my views on human equality or freedom one whit. By the accepted meaning of the term I am a liberal. I resent the concerted effort to steal the liberal standard from positions like mine and to plant it on the opposite ideological ground.

At the core, the liberal and conservative traditions are at least distinguishable in that the liberal celebrates equality and freedom; the conservative status and rank. Sir Henry Maine, the 19th-century jurist, wrote that the progress of the law had been from status to contract, noting that a legal system wherein rights and duties were determined by free agreement of the parties was preferable to one wherein they are determined by status or assignment.

Conservative society was by and large committed to inherited status: master/slave in Rome, lord/serf in feudal Europe, Brahmin/Untouchable in India, and the stratified class structure in England.

The liberal thrust throughout history has always been against these conservative-sponsored rigidities in which one's place in society was ascribed at birth.

The freedom of individual movement for which the liberal opted was too often restricted by prejudice and by economic and educational disparity.

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Liberals, therefore, supported public education and economic reforms and the elimination of bias in society's laws and customs.

Jews, for ethical reasons as well as out of self-interest, opted for the liberal mode. The traditional societies of Europe had barred most Jews from a choice of occupation, but they longed to run life's race on every track.

Liberals and Jews especially were sensitive to the needs of those not equipped for the race or who, for whatever reason, faltered. Those in need were to be helped, preferably by equipping or reequipping them to compete, if not immediately, ultimately. Honest men, of course, had to acknowledge that the family and even good luck advantaged some and impeded others. But wise men understood that absolute evenness cannot be achieved, certainly not by government, and that an even start in a race would not guarantee an even finish. Equality before the law, neutrality as to ethnicity, religion, or sex, were the proper goals of the advocates of equal opportunity.

In the early 1960's, when President Johnson offered to make me the first chairman of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, I held these traditional liberal views which did not differ from those of almost all civil-rights activists. But then we were very close to the time when the NAACP and other vanguard organizations had pressed the United States Supreme Court for a "color-blind" interpretation of the Constitution. The thrust in the landmark cases, such as *Brown* v. *Topeka*, was to obliterate caste based on inherited color. The obstacle was the legally sanctioned tradition that governments could classify and legislate on the basis of race.

Blacks and their white allies, of whom I was one, denounced this color-conscious interpretation of the Constitution as odious and wrong. We asserted that the "person" protected in the Constitution meant simply person, one of no special color, creed, or sex. We correctly, I believe, denounced any other interpretation, including that given in the Japanese Exclusion cases during World War II, as a stain on our constitutional history.

Some time in the late 1960's, at the start of the push for black preference, initially called affirmative action, I supported what I understood was a conscious effort to seek out and bring to the fore persons who because of traditional educational and employment practice had been overlooked. Soon affirmative action was expanded to mean racial preferences, first as relatively mild and unenforced goals and timetables, hardly something to be opposed by optimists, of whom liberals have their share. Afterward came the unconcealed expectation that these goals and timetables would be met or one would risk a charge of discrimination.

Finally, the leading elements of the civil-rights movement baldly claimed the rightness and legality of imposed goals or quotas for identified members of disadvantaged groups. This is nothing less, of course, than a demand that government should classify and treat Americans on a basis which liberals had denounced for one hundred years as contemptible and invidious. This total reversal of form was described as liberalism, and those who resisted were branded as conservatives, neoconservatives, or reactionaries.

THIS politics is absurd, unfair, and counterproductive.

Absurd because the leading elements of the civil-rights movement are marching to the most conservative drumbeat of preference and position based on inherited status, pigmentation in the case of blacks, a chromosome in the case of women.

Unfair because despite the effort to discredit the term, this is reverse discrimination. What does one say to an applicant to medical school who is of Polish background or one who is from Appalachia and who would have been admitted except for preference given to a member of a racial minority? Was he or was he not denied an opportunity because of his color? And if this white came from the most disadvantaged coal-mining family, what moral principle demands that he pay the price for wrongs committed by plantation owners?

It is argued, however, that racial preferences are justified because of the length of time, pervasiveness, persistence, and the still lingering effects of discrimination. The logic of this argument would seem to call for the granting of preference in the most significant area—voting. Why not let blacks have two or three votes, or however many, to overcome the distortions in our institutions which discrimination has produced? Since blacks are under-registered even today, why not hold up white registrations until blacks are proportionately enrolled? Of course, there is no one who would support this kind of preference, but if the basic principle were right and fair, it would make good sense to apply it at the point of greatest effect, the ballot box.

Counterproductive. Built into the "new liberalism" is the smoldering dynamite of resentment which will some day rip through the veneer of support.

INHERITED ascribed status was the bane of the immigrants to this country. It was abhorrent to liberals in the past and should be now. It was no conservative, but Justice William Douglas, writing in the *DeFunis* case, the predecessor to *Bakke*, who put the matter simply: "The equal-protection clause commands the elimination of racial barriers not their creation in order to satisfy our theory as to how society ought to be organized. . . . Once race is a starting point, educators and courts are immediately embroiled in competing claims of different racial and ethnic groups that would

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make difficult manageable standards consistent with the equal-protection clause."

The progress of the law from status to contract and freedom has been temporarily detoured. But we should at least keep the signposts honest.

MORRIS B. ABRAM, *a practicing attorney, is a former president of Brandeis University and served as United States Representative to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights from 1965 to 1968. He is also past president of the American Jewish Committee.*

Elliott Abrams: The state of relations between the Jewish community and conventional liberalism has sunk so low today that the most frequently heard question is "Who deserted whom?" Have Jews become conservative or has the liberal establishment abandoned the liberal principles of the recent past—for example, by supporting quotas and Third World guerrilla groups?

My own view is that liberalism has changed, so that what is now called liberalism no longer holds political liberty and equal opportunity for each individual as cardinal principles. Rather, in today's liberalism a sort of egalitarianism, seeking a leveling redistribution of wealth enforced by constantly growing state power, combines with a curious insensitivity to political repression if it clothes itself in sufficiently progressive—i.e., redistributive—rhetoric. The interests of Jews remain rather stable: we seek to promote the rule of law, political liberty, and individual opportunity, at home and abroad. It is, then, obvious that Jews should find liberalism a bit less winning than in the past. For after all, Jews did not become tied to liberalism out of guilty conscience; we became liberals because liberalism embraced and embodied the political values which protected and advanced Jewish principles and interests. As this ceases to be the case, Jews will find the automatic preference of Left over Right more and more uncertain.

Were Jews simply becoming more conservative, the outcome of these developments would be clear: Jews would become Republicans. And surely this will seem to many to be an attractive option, given standard Republican and conservative views on defense policy, Israel, quotas, and wholesale income redistribution. To the extent that sentiment alone were to prevent such a development, it would be unfortunate; Jews are not so secure that we can afford to vote against our interests out of sentimental attachments.

Yet to me this option is unattractive, for reasons which go beyond sentiment. If, as I have argued, liberalism has abandoned the old "liberal" principles Jews believe in (and which protect Jews), this will make conservatives appear more attractive *by comparison.* They will be, that is, only comparatively more attractive, without being objectively more so. For the Republican party has over the years shown itself no bastion of support for many things Jews hold dear, such as the struggle for civil rights and civil liberties, and (in no small part through the labor movement) for social justice. To dislike the views of Andrew Young and George McGovern does not mean that those of Jake Garn or Orrin Hatch—or John Connally—are really awfully cozy either.

Which leaves us floating, with the attachment to Democratic-party liberalism broken but not replaced by any real sympathy for the Republicans. But floating is *exactly* where we should be. It is axiomatic that a group whose votes may be taken for granted is a group with limited influence. Were a larger proportion of Jews—larger than the 35 per cent who voted against McGovern—to vote Republican in 1980, and were Jews to swing from 80-per-cent Democratic in one year down to, say, 40 per cent in another, the result would be enhanced influence in *both* parties.

I believe this is likely to happen, though not to the extent that interests and principles would seem to dictate. For the sentimental link to the party of Truman and Johnson is strong, as is guilt over appearing "conservative" and thus indifferent to injustice or poverty, and as is the sentiment that Republicans aren't "our kind of people." The GOP, with its flavor of small-town Midwestern business America, holds no comfort for Jews. This is as it should be; parties are shifting coalitions, and it is no more surprising that Jews should become less loyal Democrats than that Southerners or Catholics should be so—all without becoming stalwart Republicans. It is sad, perhaps, but it is necessary; to vote for quotas or against the defense budget by supporting purebred Left liberals is a luxury Jews cannot afford. This realization will dawn on more and more Jews over time, and the Jewish community will be much the better off if it happens soon and is soon understood by the nation's politicians.

ELLIOTT ABRAMS *practices law in Washington, D.C., and writes widely on public policy.*

Robert Alter: It seems to me important to distinguish between liberals and liberalism because what has essentially happened over the last decade is that large numbers of those who are eager to be identified as liberals have allowed classic liberal principles to be seriously compromised in the causes and policies they have chosen to advocate. The main reason for this

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subversion from within of the liberal agenda is obvious enough: the liberal community, whether out of guilt or confusion or still darker motives, has assimilated certain eminently anti-liberal ideas from the radicalism of the late 60's. The most salient of these, at least in regard to Jewish interests, are reflected in the terms of the symposium statement: (1) a rejection of meritocracy in favor of some scheme of "compensatory justice" (racial and sexual quotas); (2) reverse racism (many liberals continue to act in the spirit of Susan Sontag's symptomatic utterance of the late 60's that the white race is "the cancer of humanity"); (3) a rejection of representative government and individual rights as universally applicable ideals in favor of general support for the Third World and its self-styled movements of national liberation, however fanatic, violent, and anti-democratic such movements might be.

It hardly needs to be observed that when a liberal agenda begins to encourage discriminatory legislation and a species of racism at home, repressive and belligerent regimes abroad, it has come in its own circuitous way to espouse positions that have been traditionally associated with the political Right. The ascendancy of the Right has always meant trouble for the Jews, and this is no less true when rightist principles are adorned with leftist banners. As a Diaspora community, we depend on a genuinely egalitarian, meritocratic society in which racist attitudes are considered too pernicious to be allowed serious political expression. As Zionists, we know that the survival of a democratic Jewish state in the Middle East requires the staunchest resistance both to the ideal of Islamic regional hegemony and to domination by terror.

WHAT is a Jew, or for that matter, any person of liberal conscience, to do about this disquieting erosion of liberalism? The alternatives outside of the Democratic party do not seem particularly encouraging. At this early moment, there is no way of knowing who the Republican presidential candidate will be, but several now in the running might prove even worse for Israel than any Democrat in sight. One should remember that not only Jesse Jackson but also John Connally is prepared to hand over the West Bank lock stock and barrel to the PLO with the demagogic claim that this will bring lasting peace to the region and give America cheap and abundant oil. (It would appear that there are now a dozen motives for Americans to justify Arab militancy, from Third World boosterism to a personal association with oil interests, while there remains scant motive to justify Israel's concern for its own survival.) I suppose the one Republican candidate who is clearly a strong supporter of Israel is Ronald Reagan, but he illustrates all too vividly the danger of trying to choose a candidate on a single issue, for his general views are so retrograde and his competence so questionable that I find it hard to imagine that sane liberals, whatever their concern for Israel, would want to contemplate voting for him.

This leaves us, alas, the Democratic party and the liberal community of America as it is presently constituted. From what I have said, it should be clear that I don't think a reconsideration of the Jewish commitment to liberalism as a political orientation is warranted, and I hope there will be no serious erosion of that commitment. The question, then, is to what extent the anti-liberal positions I have noted are now deeply rooted in the American liberal community, or to what extent they may still be displaced by polemical pressure from within the community itself.

In this regard, I tend, somewhat waveringly, to cautious optimism. The hatred of America and the opposition to democratic values that surfaced in the New Left were deeply felt urges, but the liberal version of such radical ideas is, I suspect, more a matter of vogue, sustained and diffused by the media and the policy-making hierarchies of local and national government. What we may be dealing with, in other words, is ideas that are not the expression of a profound anti-liberal outlook but ideas that have a decade of institutional and propagandistic momentum behind them. This momentum could conceivably be broken by the cumulative shock of external events, like those now taking place in Iran. In any case, I would hope that the growing impingement on vital Jewish interests here and in Israel would impel more and more Jews to speak out against these ideas and to encourage fellow liberals to restore the liberal agenda.

ROBERT ALTER, *a contributing editor of* COMMENTARY, *is professor of Hebrew and Comparative Literature at Berkeley. His most recent book is* A Lion for Love: A Critical Biography of Stendhal.

Josiah Lee Auspitz: I feel about American "liberalism" much as I do about this COMMENTARY symposium: there are tendencies associated with it that I do not like—the "ism" method of discussing politics, for example—but I would not dream of cancelling my subscription.

Admittedly, I take the long view: liberalism is that movement in political thought which over the past few centuries has given us the rule of law, the culture of civility that sustains it, and a certain magnanimity about bringing new people into the exercise of effective citizenship. The twin meanings of "liberal"—free and generous—reflect what is best in the political doctrine.

Seen against the sweep of world history, liberal-

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ism is something recent, and there is a natural-law variant of it that is distinctively American. "The citizens of the United States," as George Washington put it in a memorable letter to the Hebrew congregation of Newport, Rhode Island, "have a right to applaud themselves for having given to mankind examples of an enlarged and liberal policy—a policy worthy of imitation. . . . It is now no more that toleration is spoken of as if it were the indulgence of one class of people that another enjoyed the exercise of inherent natural rights, for, happily, the government of the United States, which gives to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance, requires only that they who live under its protection should demean themselves as good citizens. . . ."

Washington's is the authentic voice of American liberalism. It distinguishes between a public and a private sphere and extends both to everyone as a matter of "natural right." It demands only that the pursuit of private interests be governed by an informed grasp of public responsibilities. In joining civility with liberality with natural law, it brings ideas together in a way that remains recognizably American. Indeed, much of what passes in our country today for conservatism, neoconservatism, libertarianism, progressivism, radicalism, moderation, and the democratic part of democratic socialism is really an emphasis on some partial view of an ideal of civil freedom that can still properly be called liberal.

This ideal, being a political one, was never intended as self-sufficient. Yet it has by now achieved a conceptual integrity that enables it to take wing, independent of the well-known historical contingencies attending its birth—conditions often called (in the "ism" method) capitalism, Protestantism, scientific positivism, and interest-group pluralism.

As to the relation between Judaism and liberalism, since the one predates the other by some millennia, there is scant evidence for arguing an indissoluble bond between them, still less for asserting that Judaism has flourished only under liberal regimes. What can be said is that in a liberal polity the biblical conception of justice, which integrates notions of righteousness, charity, and law, finds its closest modern analogue. What goes without saying is that only in a liberal society can the Judaic notion of chosenness be, as it was for Abraham, fully one's own choice, And, of course, to choose to be a Jew, of whatever persuasion, gives evidence, in the noble, affirmative sense of the word, of a deep strain of "conservatism."

BUT enough of "isms." COMMENTARY has more tactical considerations in mind. By the "standard liberal agenda" it refers to the policies that for nearly five decades have sustained the New Deal coalition—"guns and butter" Lyndon Johnson called them. To label them liberal was always a bit strained, though it did have this rationale: liberalism had routinely assumed some sort of property and literacy qualification; state action could therefore have a genuinely liberal effect in extending the prerequisites of citizenship to those who lacked suitable opportunities in the private sector —many of them Jews, Catholics, and Southern Baptists of both races whose descendants until this day remain the mainstays of the Democratic party.

By a crazy metonymy, however, the instrument of extending the liberal ideal—federal spending and legislation—was mistaken for the ideal itself. And the health of the New Deal coalition came to depend on the ability of a beneficent state to "deliver"—that is, to service the increasingly conflicting and voracious constituencies of the Democratic coalition. The denouement is well known. When the federal role was rapidly expanding, in peace and war, the coalition thrived; as federal action flagged, the coalition partners have grown restive and amenable to Republican appeals. But the deeper story lies in the shifting rationale for state action itself—away from the classical liberal notion of the state as providing a framework for citizens in their self-chosen purposes and toward a view of the state as having admirable purposes of its own; away from the view of the state as governing, toward a view of it as managing; away from the politics of citizenship, toward the politics of membership in interest groups.

Now COMMENTARY's symposium statement is remarkable for being couched almost wholly in the idiom of interest-group politics, and as such politics go, it is astutely formulated. It suggests a series of emotional issues on which Jews might be persuaded to move into a swing position in the coming election: the lurid portrayal of affirmative action for blacks and Hispanics in the light of the *numerus clausus*; the comparison of a beleaguered Israel with the Jews of the Holocaust, even the delicate hint of an analogy between the silence of European Christendom in World War II with the presumed "paucity of liberal protest against the anti-Semitism . . . etc.," a point which might also be explained by COMMENTARY's having sent out its questionnaire a week before the countermovement against Young and Jesse Jackson by leaders of the NAACP and Urban League.

But even without such consciousness-raising, it is already clear that Jews will be singled out (with the perennial farmers) for swing status. To any competent Republican strategist, the political arithmetic adds up this way: among the Democrats, a Southern Baptist of military education and a Northern Catholic of pro-union sympathies are vying for the Presidency. Between them they symbolize the two great pillars of the New Deal coalition, and one cannot rule out their patching it up before November. Absent a black or Hispanic on the Republican ticket, the Democrats will also have an unchallenged appeal in those two communities. Of the traditionally Democratic ethnic groups that leaves only one base wholly uncovered:

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the Jews, who happen to be strategically placed in the large swing states and who have in the past two presidential elections shown an increasing willingness to vote Republican. Precisely because Jewish voters are negligible in GOP nominating politics, any Republican who is looking toward the general election can credibly lay the ground for a determined overture to them in the crucial weeks between the early Republican convention and the later Democratic one.

As a swing group in 1980, Jews can have a limited impact on the agenda of both parties. How will their recognized spokesmen use this leverage? Not, one hopes, by making it obligatory to rant about quotas (which the Supreme Court has already ruled out as an instrument of public policy in the *Bakke* case) and the alleged softness of the "liberals" toward the PLO, nor even by presenting a public shopping list to both parties on behalf of Israel, whose very survival depends on its acceptance in more than merely Jewish terms. The wisest course for Jewish leadership is so unfashionably public-spirited that one almost blushes to recommend it. It is to insist again that America find constitutional means to extend effective citizenship to the seriously disadvantaged, to insist that American policy integrate into the NATO defense structure its most reliable Middle Eastern allies, and to present its demands in a civic spirit befitting the most advantaged Jewish community in the 2,500-year history of the Diaspora.

As Americans and as Jews, we would do well to recall the generous vision George Washington shared with the Hebrew congregations of Philadelphia, New York, Charlestown, and Richmond:

> Gentlemen: The liberality of sentiment toward each other, which marks every political and religious denomination of men in this country, stands unparalleled in the history of nations.
>
> The affection of such a people is a treasure beyond the reach of calculation. . . .

JOSIAH LEE AUSPITZ *is director of the Project in Public Philosophy of the Sabre Foundation. He serves on the Advisory Committee on Outreach of the Republican National Committee.*

Arnold Beichman: The only way I could support the 1980 Democratic presidential candidate, something I have done in nine out of eleven elections since 1936, is if he should be Daniel P. Moynihan.

I would not vote for President Carter's reelection. He represents the full flowering of American liberalism in foreign policy, which means that he equates a realistic desire for national security with immoral militarism and that he regards opposition to Soviet-supported political movements and coups d'état in Asia and Africa as needless confrontations. In short, Carterism means, to use the President's phrase, avoiding "an inordinate fear of Communism."

The continuation of a Carter foreign policy could mean the defeat of our democracy and of our allies in Europe by the Soviet Union without a resisting shot or missile being fired.

I could not vote for Senator Kennedy, the spokesman for an unaccommodationist domestic liberalism, whose foreign-policy views seem to be congruent with those of President Carter. I find Kennedy's views no more acceptable today than I did when they represented Senator McGovern's political agenda in 1972. In that election, I preferred not to vote at all. My discomfort with bureaucratic domestic liberalism is with its cultural provenance to the exclusion of honorable political brokerage. (Although I voted for Adlai Stevenson in 1952, I did not vote for him in 1956 or for President Eisenhower, the man who preached a rollback of the Soviet Union when he campaigned in 1952 and then, to our shame, allowed the Soviet Red Army to crush the uprising of East German workers in 1953 and of Hungarian workers in 1956.)

I go further. If the Republicans nominate Ronald Reagan against either Carter or Kennedy, I will vote for Reagan. Should the GOP candidate be John Connally and his opponent either Carter or Kennedy (I exclude Governor Brown from serious consideration), then I will sit an election out for the third time in my voting life.

I offer this much abridged political autobiography as a simple way of answering COMMENTARY's questions. It is a way of saying that the time has come when the kissing has to stop, the kissing between liberalism and American Jews. The kissing should have stopped in 1972 when the New Left and the New Class took over the Democratic party, but there is no time like now.

WHAT must be recognized is that liberalism has been degenerating as a moral force since the Russian revolution and the subsequent implanting in the Western democracies of Moscow-financed Communist parties. The last sixty years have seen the growth of a noxious weed in the liberal garden, the dishonorable and dishonest double standard which ultimately benefits Left totalitarianism and the Soviet Union. Whatever vitality liberalism possessed before World War I was sapped by this morally injudicious application to political events of one standard for the democracies and another, more indulgent standard for every new barbaric Communist or socialist regime which shot its way to power. Sidney Hook's concept of the "totalitarian liberal" has become a norm in our political culture.

In fact, liberalism today demonstrates its loss of meaning and content by the necessity, in order to

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avoid incoherence, of prefacing the word "liberal" with some kind of categorical adjective, pejorative or eulogistic or neutral in meaning—advanced, anti-Communist, Catholic, complacent, conservative, doctrinaire, hopeless, knee-jerk, left-wing, limousine, meliorative, moderate, old-fashioned, pragmatic, progressive, right-wing, staunch, tepid, totalitarian, tough-minded, white. A political philosophy so dependent on adjectival epithets for definition is no philosophy at all.

The reason for the adjectives is obvious. During the early years of the half-century that liberalism ruled as America's state religion, the content of liberalism had a modest finitude. But in the last thirty years, liberalism collapsed before the corrupting and fraudulent pretensions of Soviet foreign policy; witness the enormous liberal support for the Waldorf "peace" conference in the spring of 1949. In other words, liberalism has been guilty of countless evasions of moral responsibility and moral understandings, one here, one there. An identification of the individual liberal has become necessary on any given issue.

The concept of "anti-Communist liberal" would be no more necessary than "totalitarian liberal" if modern liberalism had not been selective in its political discriminations. In 1944, George Orwell, recognizing the flexibility of liberal behavior, wrote: "The sin of nearly all left-wingers from 1933 onward is that they have wanted to be anti-fascist without being anti-totalitarian."

So today we have a new category of "liberal"—the "black liberal," men like Andrew Young and Jesse Jackson who plead that they would like to be, indeed are, pro-Israel but are in fact unhesitatingly pro-PLO, who find Israeli behavior rebarbative and PLO behavior understandable, who admire "socialist" tyrannies while condemning "racist" dictatorships.

Not only the Jewish community but American culture must reexamine its past commitment to liberalism because, more and more, liberalism has intertwined what was its humanist doctrine with Marxist-Leninist socialism via grandiose schemes of state intervention. As Bernard-Henri Lévy has written, in our time Marxism has been "elevated to the status of a hegemonic culture in Western societies." Marxism-Leninism now exercises a political force in our most prestigious seats of higher learning with effects that can be seen in our foreign policy. The Carter administration now accepts leftist socialist tyrannies in the Caribbean and in Africa while directing all its power against militarist, rightist *juntas* in Latin America and ebbing racist regimes in Africa—all in the name of human rights. There is moral condemnation of authoritarian rulers, but prudential judgments on the Soviet Union's invasion of Africa. Liberalism has a strategy for minor-league Latin American dictators and for our friends on Taiwan but none for the most powerful and most threatening dictatorship since Hitler. What does Pinochet do in a year that is worse than what Brezhnev does in a day?

We must reconsider the traditional commitment to liberalism because the curse of revolutionism has infiltrated and overwhelmed its doctrines. Once, in the early decades of liberalism, self-interest, not utopianism, was regarded as a perfectly good motive for political and economic behavior. No more.

It was Adam Smith who pointed out that it was not from the benevolence of the butcher, brewer, or baker that we expect our dinner but from their regard for their own interest. As Samuel Brittan has written: "In politics as in economics, the pursuit of self-interest may, contrary to what unreflective moralists suppose, serve to promote the welfare of one's own citizens." Modern liberalism looks upon the idea of self-interest as a motivating force in society with the same disdain that it looks upon a professed love of one's country.

Modern liberalism may say that it accepts the idea of self-interest but, in the real world, it argues for other overriding interests which would victimize Israel specifically and the democracies generally. Would it not, say, be in the interest of the U.S. and in the interest of the Zimbabwean people to support Bishop Muzorewa in the wake of a perfectly legitimate election which he won? What would liberalism, powerfully ensconced in Washington, today be saying if Nkomo and Mugabe had won the election and the Bishop were protesting its results? Would Washington liberalism have questioned the election of two burgeoning tyrants supported by the Soviet Union and Cuba? The African specialist at the Council on Foreign Relations who edited CFR's latest book on Africa, according to the *Wall Street Journal*, wrote with emphasis: "The development of democratic political systems in Africa should *not* be a goal of U.S. policy. . . . The formation of capitalist economic systems should *not* be a U.S. goal." Such is the stuff of modern liberalism.

As I have said: our relationship to contemporary liberalism should be reconsidered and the best way to achieve that reconsideration is to help Senator Moynihan become the Democratic nominee for President in 1980.

Arnold Beichman, *a writer and political scientist and the author of* Nine Lies About America, *is now teaching at Okanagan College, British Columbia.*

Daniel Bell: As with all such questions, an answer depends on how one defines liberalism. I need scarcely remind you that in Europe a liberal was one who stood for (and in some places, still stands for) the minimal state. The powerful German political philosopher, Carl

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Schmitt, who early embraced Nazism but was then repulsed, attacked liberalism for being "anti-political." As he wrote: "The specific political distinction to which political actions and motives can be reduced is that between friends and enemies." This is akin to Lenin's famous formula of politics: *kto-kvo,* who will defeat whom? Politics, in these instances, is the whole of one's life. And politics is only naked power. When some today deride a defense of the merit principle and claim that it is only a mask for privilege, they are being political in the way Schmitt and Lenin were. But the heart of classical liberalism—I go back to Kant—is the separation of spheres: of the economic from the political, the religious from the political, precisely to give the individual a life space of his own. And this is the foundation of the liberal, the free society.

The fundamental problem of our politics was posed by Rousseau. In modern times, he said, a man is both *bourgeois* (i.e., pursuing his individual self-interest) and *citoyen* (having public obligations). How does one reconcile the two? Bentham did so by denying one of the polarities. The community, he said, is but a fiction, and one seeks to measure the greatest good for the greatest number (in itself a contradiction, since one cannot maximize two different functions in a single number). Rousseau (in one of his incarnations) said that man in civil society had to suppress his egoism and "alienate himself" into the single moral personality which is the general will (a theme which found its contemporary embodiment, as Benjamin Schwartz has pointed out, in Mao Zedong).

But Kant accepted the distinction between the public citizen and the private individual, which had so bothered Rousseau, and reinforced it. The liberal theory as postulated by Kant had two aspects: that law is to be formal (i.e., procedural), not substantive; and that law is separate from morality. In the first conception, individuals were free to make their own bargains within the framework of the rule of law. To use a distinction of Hayek's, men were to be treated equally, not to be made equal (which would require some administrative intervention). In the second (deriving from the wars of religion of the 17th and 18th centuries), no group could impose its own private beliefs on the polity through the secular arm of the state. One could prosecute crime, but not sin; one could enforce rights, but not righteousness.

With all their difficulties, these principles are more relevant today than ever before. The fundamental fact is that almost all societies in the world today are *plural societies,* with large admixtures of religious, ethnic, linguistic, and national minorities. And for reasons that I have spelled out elsewhere (in the *Ethnicity* volume edited by Nathan Glazer and Daniel P. Moynihan), the character of minority identification has become politically salient—with the obvious threat of turning the polity into a battleground of "friends and enemies," rather than a polity of citizens.

If we are to have a polity of citizens, what I have called a "public household," then these classic principles of liberalism need to be reaffirmed. The postulate of liberalism is that in the public arena all persons should be *treated* equally, on the basis of their individual attributes, not their group characteristics. But when individuals come together, as inevitably they do, in some group form, such memberships are entitled to the protection of the laws, and to respect for their group beliefs, in their plural identities.

Of course there are difficulties. What principles fit every situation? Where individuals in public circumstances are kept unequal, they may have to be "made" equal, in order to be treated equally. This is the moral case for affirmative action, and the prudential case, at times, for reverse discrimination. But nothing is gained by a confusion of terms. One may have to "bend" a principle to rectify an injustice, but this is not a repudiation of the normative principle itself.

Given the character of plural societies, how can we do without the postulates of liberalism?*

THERE is, however, a distinction between "liberalism," in the sense I have used the term, and "liberals" as defined by the editors of COMMENTARY. And the two are not, historically and sociologically, the same.

The "liberals" of Western society are those who, at best, embody the perennial utopian longings to do good *for* others (less by personal than governmental action) in order to bear witness against inequality and injustice; and, at worst, to strike a narcissistic posture of cozy nonconformity against the bourgeois culture that pays them well, the tedious nose-thumbing of Madison Avenue uptown (between 86th St. and 59th St.) against Madison Avenue downtown.

One can easily dismiss the liberal *poseurs.* But utopian impulses weave their own, more complicated snares. In its self-pride, it is the harsh imposition of a revolutionary self-righteousness, calling itself moral purity, against the "corrupted" human stuff of the old order, taking its most ghastly form in our time in the savage fury of the Pol Pot regime in Cambodia. In its masochism, it is the abasement

* Lest this be taken as a statement of an entire social philosophy, I should also point out that in the economic realm I am a socialist, and in culture a conservative. I do believe that different principles govern these realms. Since economics is instrumental, I believe that the community is the necessary unit of priority and has the first lien on resources in order to provide a basic social minimum for every member of the society. In culture I am a conservative because I believe in tradition and continuity, in moral authority and aesthetic judgment, as against the "populism" of everyone "doing his own thing." It is in the polity that I am a liberal. This is an argument I have sketched in my *Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism,* and reiterated in the introduction to the paperback edition of that book.

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of liberals before an idolatry which is the other face of that utopianism, and to genuflect before such images. As Nadezhda Mandelstam wrote, in her remarkable memoir:

> My brother Evgeni Yakovelevich used to say that the decisive part in the subjugation of the intelligentsia was played not by terror and bribery (though, God knows, there was enough of both), but by the word "Revolution," which none of them could bear to give up. It is a word to which whole nations have succumbed, and its force was such that one wonders why our rulers still need prisons and capital punishment.

And for liberals today, the equivalent "buzz" words are "National Liberation," or "Human Emancipation," or, in the words of one reviewer in the *New Republic*, "the Revolution of Hope sweeping the Third World." In 1979!

MORE than thirty-five years ago, I published a short essay in *Partisan Review*, entitled "Word Surrealism," in which I expressed my puzzlement about such oxymorons as "secular religion," or "totalitarian liberal," used to deride the Left. One can understand the ironic motives behind such characterizations, intellectual and polemical, but such word play has its dangers, as in the quixotic dialectic whereby such tables are turned. Today we pay increasingly for such linguistic confusions in the glib way that phrases like "repressive tolerance" are mouthed or the easy equations of "apartheid," "racism," and "Zionism." Unhappy are the times when language loses its clear and distinct meanings.

The problem with "liberals" is easy, for experience itself is the harsh teacher, for those who retain the capacity to learn. And with Cambodia, the liberals are confronted with the simplicities of Marxism and the complexities of ideological hubris, as a previous generation learned the hard way about the God that failed in the Gulags of Stalin's Russia. It is the return to "liberalism" that is more difficult, especially when people fail to distinguish among rhetorical emotion, prudential compromises, and the underlying principle of the separation of realms.

The editors of COMMENTARY have asked a question about 1980. And in good rabbinical fashion I have not replied directly but with a disquisition. The reason is that I do not think the relevant issue is the political disorders of 1980, but the need to make clear distinctions. And the primary one is between liberalism and the liberals. Let us take back the one, and forgo the other.

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Eugene B. Borowitz: I do not recognize the Jewish liberals the symposium statement mentions. I know Marxists, radicals, and pseudo-radicals who support quotas, turn from Israel, flirt with the PLO, and condone black anti-Semitism. Such views are generally anathema to the Jewish liberals I know, that is, the sort of people who voted for McGovern despite then Ambassador Rabin's statement that Nixon was better for the Jews. No honest conservative approves of smears, so confusion must only be a reflection of the common contemporary problem of defining a "liberal." When the supposedly well-informed reporters of the New York *Times* can confidently prophesy that Daniel P. Moynihan would support Kennedy against Carter—which he has not done—and when Moshe Dayan leaves the Begin cabinet in protest against its West Bank rigidity, the political lines blur badly.

Like most Jewish liberals in recent years, I have been chastened in my hopes that government can produce greater social justice. People are not as moral or rational as I once believed; professors and journalists are not as smart; and government is not only as corruptible as other American institutions but has its own proclivities for producing evil with the good. Messianic liberalism has died but practical and Jewish reasons keep me and many Jews from going conservative.

We fear the power interests behind the new conservatives. Ronald Reagan, having the Right, may now speak softly as he sidles toward the Center to avoid the Goldwater stigma. John Connally, desperate for support, exposes where the monied and privileged people want to take us. The same concern for preserving status that produced his denunciation of affirmative action had previously moved him to blast Israel. Minority interests may be sacrificed if necessary to preserve the prerogatives of the well-to-do and well-connected. I and others find that where conservatives are in control, Jews and other outsiders have only token jobs and little power, are barred from clubs where the best people make contacts, and are made to feel unwanted in the most socially prestigious neighborhoods. Conservatives want to retain power, not share it. They scorn those who are too scrupulous to wield power effectively. They will not be squeamish in that regard. I and other Jews remain liberal because we fear the undemocratic forces on the Right more than big government or anything we see on the Left.

We believe a constitutional government is more to be trusted to improve society than is an open market, benign neglect, or other natural arrangements. The Corvair, Three Mile Island, and other profit-motive extravaganzas indicate what we can expect from supposedly self-regulating capitalism. Government has its abuses—but the Constitution gives all citizens rights by which to correct them. Against corporate immorality and the venality of

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the privileged all we can count on are proxy fights and public outrage—or government. We require steady government initiative if minorities are to attain a more appropriate place in our socio-economic order. Without it, the exclusivism of the established and the historic American prejudice against other than Northwestern Europeans will erode our recent gains in democracy and strengthen discrimination.

THE three major events of modern Jewish history mandate my liberalism. The emancipation of the Jews from the ghetto resulted from government action to outlaw disabilities which centuries of genteel tradition had sanctioned. The state of Israel came into being because of political action, not passive trust in the social order. And the Holocaust did not begin with the Jews. The Nazis first murdered another minority, mental defectives, and having successfully picked off one group of outcasts, moved on to others, the Jews, the Gypsies, and the rest. Diaspora Jewish self-interest still demands energetic work to secure functioning democracy for everyone, economic security as well as civil rights. Minorities rightly fear that conservatives are not, in principle, committed to pluralism; heterodox views might get people to change things. Thus, COMMENTARY no longer has liberal articles, only attacks on liberal views, even going out of its way to upbraid *Sh'ma* magazine for still daring to allow the Jewish community to hear liberal voices—in debate with conservative ones! (See Julius Weinberg's ludicrously inaccurate analysis of contemporary Reform Judaism, COMMENTARY, November 1979.) The fate of Jews in a country long dominated by American conservatives may be extrapolated from their well-known attitudes toward the effete intellectuals of the Northeast.

If Jews were normal, one would predict that they would continue turning more conservative. All Americans are doing so, and the present social system has benefited us spectacularly well. We are the wealthiest minority group in the country. Then, too, our leaders keep telling us that conservative politics will be good for the state of Israel, which is, for most of us, the equivalent of being good for the Jews. Moreover, we have no significant leader to call us back to liberalism. Alexander M. Schindler, whose native inclinations lie in this direction, is a captive of our system. He attained his preeminent status as the wise, energetic spokesman for our concerns about the state of Israel. The moment he speaks up vigorously for the liberal agenda he will lose his broad Jewish following. Israeli needs seem to require conservative American political positions and our fund raisers, who substantially control mass Jewish opinion, find it useful to keep us in a state of near-emergency. Realism is against Jewish liberalism.

But the survival of the Jews is itself an argument against the ultimacy of realism. Against the social forces there stands our innate sense of what a modernized Jew must strive to be. Our greatest thinkers in this century have been committed to ethical activism and models of its application. Hermann Cohen and Martin Buber were religious socialists. In Theresienstadt as afterward, Leo Baeck maintained that ethical monotheism was the essence of Judaism. Mordecai Kaplan permits the Jewish folk to create Judaism as it wishes, with one exception, ethics, which it must follow. And Abraham Heschel remains our supreme example of the integration of Jewish loyalty and liberal activism.

Many Jews still know their teachings were right. Our participation in general society rests on a covenant. We expect our culture to try to break the shackles of its tradition of prejudice and we, in turn, will work for the betterment of general society with the passion we once restricted to the needs of the Jewish community. Judaism means that to us now that it is situated in a democratic social order. Liberalism may not be the Messiah—but it remains our best Jewish way of living with less sin.

EUGENE B. BOROWITZ *is a theologian who founded and edits* Sh'ma, a journal of Jewish responsibility. *Two books by him will appear this year:* Contemporary Christologies: A Jewish Response *and* Modern Theories of Judaism.

Balfour Brickner: A conviction currently held suggests that because liberalism has failed, Jews who at one time might have been liberals should now, in their own self-interest, switch their allegiance to a more realistic new conservatism. Evidence offered to justify this bromide includes (a) the widespread support of liberals for a detestable quota system; (b) the diminishing enthusiasm of liberals for Israel and their growing support for the hated PLO; and (c) the paucity of liberal protest against the anti-Semitism that surfaced in the wake of Andrew Young's resignation.

Liberalism did not fail. To the contrary, it succeeded so long as liberals gave it their strong energy. The civil-rights movement and its subsequent legislation, the anti-Vietnam war struggle, opposition to the draconian regime of Nixon/Agnew and their eventual expulsion from the White House they sullied were campaigns waged primarily by liberals. If liberalism lies dormant today, it is only because liberals grow weary and quit.

The evidence suggested by the three "developments" cited above does not warrant a Jewish defection from our classic support of liberalism. Americans have had their confidence in govern-

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ment, in the system, and in their own capacity to affect change destroyed by the incredible deceit and immorality of those entrusted with the maintenance of the political fabric of society. They lost the momentum to continue working for progressive legislation or for change. Anger replaced hope. Cynicism eroded a willingness to try. But a desire remains for those values for which liberalism has always stood.

While opposition to affirmative action and school-busing programs has grown since the early 1970's, research indicates that so has support for the more basic proposition that members of all races should be allowed equal access to jobs and schools. The percentage of those favoring the death penalty (an issue beloved of conservatives, and traditionally detested by liberals) has increased in recent years, but so too has the recognition that the solution to crime lies in the correction of problems of poverty and unemployment. Similarly, polls show that our citizens want greater governmental responsibility for health care, social security, public transportation, etc. Inflation, recession, unemployment, energy now join race, class, and sex inequality as the pervading dysfunctions of American life. They are our new agenda. Evidence suggests that on each of these issues, more rather than less governmental involvement will be necessary and *accepted* if the dilemmas they pose are to be solved. What can one conclude from this? Only that while many individuals have more conservative leanings on some emotionally charged issues, they still look to government to supply social needs. Governmental intrusion has never been a remedy proposed by conservatives. More comprehensive movements of the Left, including the possible election to the Presidency of a liberal-leaning Democratic Senator who, if nominated, will probably be supported by more than 60 per cent of Jewish voters, may yet develop as Americans seek to get to the heart of our nation's ills. In short, any dismissal of liberalism is at least premature.

Equally misleading is the temptation to analogize through the examples cited. Condemnation by association is an illegitimate rhetorical trick.

Quotas are presented as undesirable devices. Liberals are described as defenders of quotas, ergo, liberals are to be viewed pejoratively. But liberals are also notorious supporters of affirmative action. The Jewish community, through the voice of many of its organizations, is on record as supporting affirmative action, at least as an interim ethic. Are we not then entitled to conclude that liberals are to be viewed positively, their stance acknowledged, their position supported?

Liberals are accused of defecting in their support for Israel and intensifying their endorsement of the PLO. John Connally fits that description. Is John Connally a liberal? Moreover, support for the PLO and criticism of Israel now come increasingly from American oil interests, mainline church bodies turned conservative, American business, conservative newspapers and journals. In fact, criticism of the current Israeli government, particularly as Begin seems to be turning the issue of West Bank autonomy into a policy of gradual annexation, comes with increasing frequency from the entire spectrum of political opinion. In Israel, too, some of the severest criticism of government policies comes from young, ex-military people and from intellectuals who vigorously protest any effort to identify them as liberals or doves. Israel's "Peace Now" movement defies such facile labeling. It is true that in America some blacks identified with Third World causes (radical, leftist, not necessarily liberal) have associated themselves with the PLO position and have joined those who have historically condemned Israel's right to exist, but just as many black leaders, long identified as liberals, have associated themselves completely with Israel's cause. Finally, what conservative voices in this country protested against the alleged eruption of anti-Semitism in the wake of Andrew Young's resignation? Why should liberals be singled out for their silence?

SHOULD these or similar "developments" affect our thinking as Jews about the legitimacy of liberalism? I think not. The criteria by which we are asked to judge the validity of liberalism are really no criteria at all. There are different and better indices to apply when deciding whether or not to support various causes, programs, social directions. The yardstick is twofold. First, the goals ought to be ultimately protective of personal and social freedom; they should enhance the quality of life. Second, each suggestion should be candled against the light of compassion.

Freedom is the unique quality of America. The zeal with which we struggle to preserve personal and social freedom is unprecedented. It is both the hallmark and the *sine qua non* of our existence. Second to this passion is our conviction that somehow it is necessary for the public sector of society to intervene compassionately and protectively on behalf of the disadvantaged, the sick, the poor, those in whom the spark of divinity burns too dimly and who need the breath of compassion to fan that spark into full light. Freedom and social concern are values as Jewish as the Jewish belief in God. When any aspect of freedom is threatened, Jews have an obligation to protest as Jews. Nothing could be more Jewishly elemental than this. Jews, thank God, still seem to feel this way. A recent poll indicates that voting Jews remain strongly in favor of having the government pay for abortions for the poor. They favored by a 59 to 33 per-cent margin the right of homosexual teachers to work in the public schools. They did not want the defense budget raised. They favor SALT II. They were less interested than others in a constitutional amendment requiring a

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balanced budget and less impressed with the significance of the Panama Canal as a voting issue. One fact that seemed to underline their liberalism was that half the Jews interviewed reported household incomes of more than $25,000, a level at which other respondents to most questions had become more conservative.

While American Jewry is as angry and as frustrated as any element of the population by the growth of crime, and the corruption of government, and while Jews, too, are turning inward, increasingly concerned with their own particularistic agendas, they have not yet succumbed totally to backlash and they have not taken the advice of those in the American Jewish community who have sought to scare them into more conservative postures.

It is hardly more than a decade since some advocates of what was then the new Jewish conservative posture proclaimed with audacious certitude that Nixon was "one of the righteous Gentiles of the world," "a victim of the licentiousness of the liberal press." It is fewer than ten years since those on the Jewish political Right tried to silence into invisibility Jewish liberals opposed to the war in Vietnam by suggesting that Jews would become the scapegoats of American frustration and rage if America lost that war. It is fewer than ten years since we were advised by the Jewish conservatives to crawl into our Jewish shells and let the rest of the world go by. Many Jews did. Many are still there. But the prognostications of the Jewish Right were wrong. Dead wrong. So too is their advice.

Jewish ethics is not automatically on the liberal side, but it is not adequate for the Jewish community to point out only the flaws of liberal proposals and turn its back on the call for help from the larger world. What do Jews today say after they have said "no"? What do we as Jews intend to do with and about the society in which we find ourselves? If we continue to turn Right and think wrong, there may be nothing left. After Bergen Belsen, let us live beyond cynicism. "*Tikkun haolam*," the repair of society, is still a Judaic "demandment." It is also in our own self-interest. If it is a liberal posture as well, so much the better.

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Joel Carmichael: If monotheism is the ultimate source of liberalism, anchored as it is in the universality whose very essence is Jewish, it may seem natural, especially for Jews, to yearn for the realization of a vision embedded in the Scriptures—the brotherhood of man. This ancient connection between Jews and an ideal world would seem to indicate that Jews somehow must be liberal by nature.

Yet essentially this argument generates no more than political extremism. The proclamation of an absolute ideal unaccompanied by piecemeal procedures leading to its attainment is bound to duplicate, in secular terms, the classical religious operation called "forcing the End": the attempt to force God to act is paralleled in the workaday world by the attempt to impose one's will on sluggish history.

No doubt it is obvious that liberal ideals, which can be achieved only approximately, often slip their moorings. Liberals, originally inspired by the desire for a society free of the constraints of authoritarian institutions, often find themselves in practice reduced to the sponsorship of precisely such institutions—notably the state—as long as lip-service is paid to ideals.

This surely accounts for the liberal support of wholly repressive agencies like all Marxist governments, and, contrariwise, for liberal hatred of and contempt for free societies that have imperfections.

This strange quirk has its roots in something still more fundamental—the profound alienation that characterizes so many Jewish elites precisely at the pinnacle of success.

Thus the idealistic yearnings typical of so many Jews as they broke out of the *shtetl* a century ago have been magnified still further in their American descendants, the bulk of whom are now solidly established in the middle and upper-middle class. America, too, has numerous shortcomings: an ideal image, even projected onto real societies remote from the individual yearner, is enough to outweigh the merely material and spiritual benefits of a free society, and turns those who enjoy America most into its most insidious enemies.

Thus the split in Jewry that began with the dissolution of the *shtetl* three generations ago has reached what may be a crisis, exacerbated by the rise of the state of Israel as a historical counterweight to the Holocaust.

It is a commonplace for seemingly concerned Jews, precisely, indeed, very Jewish Jews, to refrain, in glee or in sorrow, from sympathizing with Israel because Israel fails to measure up to lofty standards of meritoriousness.

JEWISH pathology in this respect is surely unique: no other group will drive its devotion to general principles beyond its own survival. It can hardly be denied that the fine words of liberal idealism often camouflage an attitude of internalized self-denigration on the part of many Jews, whose reaction, precisely in the age of the Holocaust, has been to hide—what could be more natural! And one way of hiding is to choose a universal mask, to avoid initiative, to accommodate, above all, to the aims of others.

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This crisis in self-consciousness has now moved into the sphere of practical politics. The activist role assumed by the Soviet executive in the past five years (beginning with the invasion of Angola) has branched out into what is clearly a coordinated campaign of deep penetration, based on the massive use of janissaries from the Cubans to the PLO, and aimed at the exclusion of America from Africa and the Middle East, especially from the Persian Gulf. And as an integral part of the Middle East—indeed, as America's only reliable ally there—Israel's very existence is now in jeopardy.

It is surely a titanic irony that the split of the *shtetl* a century ago should now be influencing world events. It is strange that Jewry, whose role in the destabilization of the Czarist regime was cardinal, should now, after having been crippled in the aftermath of the Bolshevik triumph, espouse in America not merely the principles flaunted by the neo-Bolshevik bureaucrats, but side with the actual regime and its cluster of satellites in their many-sided movement for the extinction of Israel.

Thus Israel, and the free world in general, are now menaced by the Jewish foible for panaceas. In this strange warping of perspective, the indifference to Israel, or indeed even aversion to it on the part of so many contemporary Jewish liberals, plainly echoes the crises provoked in Jewish history by civil-war situations (the resistance to Hellenism, the Maccabees, the genesis of Christianity, the Spanish expulsion).

In argumentation liberals feel virtuous behind their barricade of ideals. At home in the rhetoric of universal aims, they are well-nigh impervious both to practical reason and to the needs of self-preservation.

YET so many critical situations have been multiplying for the past few years that it seems legitimate to hope that Jewish liberals will change—will perceive the great danger Jewry now faces, very specifically from the forces orchestrated by the Soviet executive. Many Jews, after all, are *not* suicidal: perhaps they may now perceive their historic addiction to panaceas for what it has been—a delusion. If they can be persuaded to exchange their traditional liberalism for a form of it that will enable them to support the true allies of Jews, and in particular of Israel, they will surely find themselves refocusing their world view not delusionally but pragmatically.

All this may be reflected in the upcoming electoral campaign in the United States. Middle East issues are presented to the public lopsidedly, obliquely, distortedly: the range of interests seems endless. Candidates will no doubt be evasive, plausible, deceitful.

Only a sound sense of self-interest can enable American Jews to thread their way between plausibility and sincerity: if self-hatred and self-contempt are hauled out of the unconscious and scrutinized by common sense, those Jews who are basically healthy will, perhaps, regroup.

JOEL CARMICHAEL, *the editor of* Midstream, *is the author of* The Shaping of the Arabs, Karl Marx, Trotsky, *and* Stalin's Masterpiece, *among other books.*

Arthur A. Cohen: Some time ago, I gave up thinking of myself as a liberal. I have never thought of myself as a conservative. I have been, as a result, without a tagging device for some time now.

Whatever support I have to give goes to the Western intellectual tradition which has consistently believed that the future depended upon the clarity with which the present estimates the past. My reflective process has, in consequence, always been too slow for political movements. In this sense I think of myself, despite the political requirements of my animality, as an amateur and a proud one at that. I refuse because of the slowness of my ways to be stampeded to the Left or the Right. This does not mean that my position is ever dead Center. I think, as best I can, from issue to issue, and where connections manifest themselves, I allow the move of implication. I generalize about politics reluctantly.

The political scene I find increasingly grim and alarming, less because of a compromised liberalism, willing to make the rush to any and every beleaguered equity, or the Right, increasingly assertive in the development of a politics of national interest, than because the assumption of a reciprocal relation of trust and returned responsibility between the citizenry and the government is eroded. I worry, therefore, about the decline of a presumed moral consensus on which the Constitution and Bill of Rights of this nation have historically relied.

Everything that I have just said is spoken as a citizen of the country, as a second-generation American whose grandparents came from Europe. Those grandparents came from the Hapsburg empire and Czarist Russia. They made it possible for me to be an American, but their emigration did not make it possible for me to be a Jew. Being a Jew is something other and only becomes part of the welter of misunderstanding when a Jew becomes ethnic and quasi-racial. In another context, I have written of this condition as that of the natural Jew, who has interests, concerns, sensibilities not necessarily those of other minorities, but like theirs no less or more privileged. The complexity arises only when the religious distinctness of the Jewish vocation comes to the forefront. The interests of natural creatures, torn by contest and intergroup tension, recede and questions of a

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destinarian nature reassert themselves. These are questions that implicate the nexus of God, man, and history. They are not relevant here, but they do supply me with a barrier to politicizing ultimate beliefs about the nature and destiny of nations and humankind.

THERE is little doubt that anti-Semitism has new strength, not only here but abroad, not only in nations with significant Jewish populations but in nations that have only small or remnant communities; neither is there question that black anti-Semitism rises with black frustration, although the latter is no excuse for the former; nor is there question that sympathy for the PLO increases in reaction to the immense cost this country has assumed for securing the Israeli-Egyptian accords and the unwillingness of the Israelis to see their situation the way Americans would like it to be seen. There is a continuous short-circuiting of perception precisely because Americans have been forced to perceive themselves as economically and politically beleaguered, a self-recognition which not even the shock of Vietnam, multiple political assassinations, and Watergate were able to engender. It has taken such bread-and-butter realities as oil, declining exports, the weakening dollar, and unchecked inflation to erode the heretofore olympian confidence of the American middle class. Moreover, no longer a snap of the fingers can put it right. The most powerful nation on earth is not as persuaded by its own rhetoric as it once was. And with all this, it is not surprising—although it is upsetting—that within sectors and pockets of the national community, it is possible once more to speak openly of the world's favorite *bête noire*—the Jews.

On the other hand, I am not certain that even such an interpretation of events would move me as a Jewish American from my amateur preoccupation with social justice and political reform —from my mediate conviction that there is corrigible injustice, that there are still wrongs to be righted, and that even if the poor, blacks, or Arabs turn their backs on me, as a Jew I have at least to understand the predicament of their unreason and their rage before I protect myself and fight back. And beyond this I am more and more persuaded that as a nation we have not yet awakened to the full consequence of the moral disaster of Vietnam, an exemplary model of political stupidity, moral cruelty, and domestic deformation. It might be well for American Jews to underscore rather more than they wish the resemblances between the Germans who invented the death camps and the horrific American ingenuity in Vietnam, lest by denying their metaphysical and moral identity they make it more and more difficult for Americans to recognize and accept their own proper guilt. It is, in other words, easy for anyone to rationalize that all they did was follow orders. As Jews and Americans we have the obligation of sharing with our fellow citizens our understanding of what happens when a nation flees its conscience and what befalls the victims when the moral voice is powerless.

I AM not a political analyst, only a political animal, and an amateur at that. I think of my interests but I am not led by them. That, I confess, is mysterious to me. I should be! Most Americans I know allow their politics to be determined by their interests. For some reason I do not. And there are many American Jews I know who are similarly unsynchronized. It has something indubitably to do with the complex interplay of Jewish tradition, conscience formation, and the secular ego, but I am not at all sure how it works. That it works I have no doubt.

It is true, surely, that Jews have been historically voting adjuncts of the Democratic party. I suspect that they will remain so in overwhelming numbers, but why should this change? Should Jews become Republicans because they doubt that the liberal agenda is any longer viable or because they identify that agenda with the Democratic party? And to whom should they turn? Republican promises and prospects are no less fragile than those of the familiar Democratic party, but at least Jews know their way around Democratic politics. Why try and get a berth in a new club, when the old one has their nameplates on front-row seats? Actually, I am being facetious. What I mean is that national debate, national scrutiny of our political order, should take place outside of the party structure. It should be authentic national debate, not party debate. If debate were to take place and if it were conducted with openness, clarity, discernment—in a word, authenticity—it would soon be accommodated to the platforms and deliberations of the parties. (A possible function of television in the national interest might well be such an updated version of *The Federalist* as an instrumentality of instructing and informing the national debate.) However, in the absence of such a national scrutiny—a scrutiny beyond and to the side of parties—it is my view that Jews will again support the candidate of the Democratic party. They may desert the liberal agenda; they might be conservative to their toenails, but it will take some heroic imagining in the Republican party or some well-concerted drive to self-destruction among the Democrats to move Jews out of the party of the New Deal. That's the last time Jews voted their interests and they've not yet forgotten it.

ARTHUR A. COHEN *is a theologian and novelist whose fourth novel,* Acts of Theft, *will be published at the end of February. His* The Natural and the Supernatural Jew *has just been republished in paperback.*

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Paul Cowan: I've never been committed to the traditional liberal agenda. Since the 60's, I've been committed to a single, simple idea: the concept of equality in America. But as a Jew, and as a journalist, my concept of what America is and how to achieve equality here has undergone a change.

That happened in the mid-70's—long before the Andrew Young affair, long before I was aware that affirmative action was a serious issue.

I worked in the Mississippi civil-rights movement in the 60's. Back then, I reflexively equated equality and integration. That was largely because I believed as an article of faith that America was a melting pot. By now, I've ceased to believe that the melting pot is a useful political metaphor.

That change of perception began in the 60's when I witnessed the splintering of the civil-rights movement. A few years later, as a journalist, I came to know the Irish and the blacks who were fighting over busing in Boston, the Episcopalians and the Baptists who battled over the religious content of textbooks in West Virginia, the Italians and Hispanics who battled over a housing project in the Bronx. There was a very thin line between my abstract concept of justice or my assumption that the same institution could accommodate such diverse people—and each group's concrete feelings of religious or ethnic loyalty. Soon I recognized some of these feelings in myself. As a Jew, I discovered I was more deeply attached to the poor elderly people on the Lower East Side than to any other group I'd written about; I found I admired a Polish-born Orthodox rabbi who lives in that neighborhood, who exists for the *mitzvot* he performs, more than any semi-public or public figure I'd seen. For me, meeting those people was like coming home.

As a result of all that, I've come to view America not as a melting pot, but as a collection of religious, ethnic, and professional tribes who coexist —often uneasily—on this continent.

I've ceased to equate equality and integration—they're not inextricably connected. In order to achieve peace, I've come to feel, you have to mediate among tribal interests instead of using the sentimental 60's language of brotherhood—or engaging in the destructive 70's competition over which group is the most oppressed. Progress has to be realized through programs that promote economic—and physical—security. Once those things are realized, then people might have enough psychological security to work together and still retain pride in their own special ethnic identities.

That means, for example, that I support genuinely adequate neighborhood schools—schools that guarantee their students equality of opportunity—and have grave doubts about divisive programs like busing. It means that I'm committed to economic programs like fair energy prices. (Iran's outrageous behavior has made it possible to focus on issues like battling OPEC, controlling the giant American oil companies, developing techniques for conservation—and to do so with a renewed sense of patriotism.) It means I'd rather see blacks and Jews unite in a war against crime—as they are doing in the Crown Heights section of Brooklyn—than fight over the specter of a housing project—as they did in Forest Hills, Queens, in 1971.

So my idea of a sensible political agenda (call it radical, liberal, conservative—I don't care) is to insist on the twin importance of economic democracy and cultural individuality.

Of course I am concerned about the rise of anti-Semitism—and about the fact that the world seems hostile to Israel. As it happens, my views are close to those of the Israeli Peace Now movement: I don't see how Israel can govern the hostile population on the West Bank and still remain an open, democratic society. But I am convinced that most Americans—and most people in the world—have a double standard about Israel. Thus, for example, I used to be a fairly uncritical supporter of Cuba. I still think it is undeniably true that the Castro regime has made great economic improvements on the island. Nevertheless, there is no way in the world that I can feel much fondness for that country after Fidel Castro's lurid attack on Zionism in the UN.

It is clear to me that, at Israel's worst, it retains a sense of justice that is unknown in most of the world.

Some people will never believe that sentence: their dislike of Israel is so mindless and reflexive that you can't convince them that their arguments rest on a double standard. Nevertheless, I think it is crucial for Zionists to insist that Israel's democracy, its flawed but continuing effort to integrate a culturally diverse population, its solar energy program, its kibbutz movement make the country far more progressive, in a practical way, than most governments Third World spokesmen extol. The problem, for me, is that most American Jews have ceased to talk about Israel's innovations. Instead, they sing *Hatikvah*, huddle behind the flag, and dismiss Israel's uneasy friends—like Andrew Young —as well as its harsh critics, like Castro. They regard them all as rhetoricians, not as intellectual equals. I think that is imprudent, since I believe that Israel—and its American supporters—can win over most neutrals, and neutralize most opponents, through fearless, honest debate.

I'm not very happy about the word quotas, but I don't see affirmative action as the unmitigated evil that most Commentary writers do. It seems to me the most effective way to create a black and Hispanic middle class—which, I think, will create a degree of stability that is in everyone's interest. Besides, as a practical matter, for every Jewish man affirmative action hurts, it will help a Jewish wom-

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an. So I'm not at all convinced that affirmative action has any relationship to the fear of anti-Semitism that haunts so many Jews.

FROM everything I've read and seen, anti-Semitism is a constant factor in a pluralistic world. In America, it waxes and wanes. Since no one knows the reasons, each of us might as well trust our own impulses about how to deal with it. Mine are that it is better to be progressive than reactionary, better to reach out than to turn inward. That way you make new friends and develop a realistic understanding of your enemies. You learn something important with each new contact.

Of course, you have to be true to your Jewish self, heeding dietary laws or observing the Sabbath if those things matter to you, insisting on the importance of Israel and the Holocaust if you live in a world where those realities are political issues.

Nevertheless, it is more sensible to confront the non-Jewish world face to face than to talk about it from the safe haven of a suburb or a magazine office. It is sensible to challenge other people's biases with your own reality.

I know this response doesn't have much to do with liberalism or with the Democratic or Republican parties. Those labels don't concern me much, for tactical reasons or for political ones. I'm far more concerned, in my private life, with being a committed Jew and a brave, resourceful, compassionate human being.

PAUL COWAN *is a staff writer for the* Village Voice *and the author of* The Making of an Un-American *and* The Tribes of America.

Werner J. Dannhauser: No 11th—or 614th—commandment exists to the effect that a Jew shall be a liberal. Attempts to demonstrate or even imply as much have always struck me as shallow or misguided. Jews have survived tolerably well under such non-liberal regimes as that of Franz Joseph in the Austro-Hungarian empire and that of the ill-starred Shah of Iran; and for Jews to fare even tolerably well is no matter of course.

While, however, we are not bonded to any particular kind of regime or modern "ism," it would be absurd to deny that as Jews we tend to have certain elective affinities to liberalism. To exercise our Judaism or Jewishness at all we must be alive; to pursue our attempt to live under the dictates of our law we must flourish to some extent. No doubt can exist that in modernity, liberal regimes have treated Jews better than others have. A thinking Jew must simply find it harder than a thinking non-Jew to condemn either the French revolution or Napoleon, our benefactors. In addition, the centrality of law to Judaism might well predispose us especially to countries committed to the rule of law, perhaps even to countries where legalism prevails.

THE above is a necessary but terribly abstract prelude to the questions asked of me as an individual Jew by COMMENTARY. My reflections might constitute an argument for a Jew's thinking twice before he refuses allegiance to a liberal democracy, but such allegiance begins to the Right of Goldwater and ends to the Left of McGovern: it has little specific to do with a Jew's relation to liberalism as it has come to be identified, and identifies itself, in today's United States.

Let me, then, indulge in brief personal reflections as I answer COMMENTARY's questions, though my own political development is for the most part quite unremarkable. How seriously have recent developments affected my own thinking about liberalism? They have hastened my estrangement from it, but my journey to the Right started long ago. I began by rooting for the Democratic party. I recall my first American political memory. As an eleven-year-old Jewish refugee in a modest Cleveland neighborhood, I thought of Wendell Willkie as a Nazi; so did most of the kids on the block. I proceeded to become radical enough so that in high school I was defending the Soviet Union even when it wasn't being attacked, but I was saved by finding Habonim and Labor Zionism. My pink tint was permanently lost when, during the late 40's, I witnessed the Wallace campaign, the Berlin blockade, and events in Czechoslovakia. Thereafter I became ever more fervently pro-Israel and anti-Communist, two views that grew ever more compatible. However, I remained a Democrat. Perhaps I was that atypical kind of liberal a teacher of mine characterized as supporting *both* the war on poverty and the war in Vietnam, but in this I was in good and ample company in the Democratic party.

In 1972, however, I was driven to vote for a Republican presidential candidate for the first—and up to now only—time in my life. Moreover, I was growing more and more disturbed by "my" party's increasing patience with foreign enemies of liberty and its increasing impatience with the necesssary risks of domestic liberty. Still, I thought of my 1972 vote at least partly as a move to recall Democrats to their senses. In my mind's eye the Democratic party continued to be characterized by exotic diversity, brawling energy, respect for minorities, and an unabashed sentimentality that could approach a kind of politics of love.

Now, I really do not know. The extra-legal sanctions against anti-Semitism have all but disappeared; it is becoming ever more fashionable to criticize Israel; and the Democratic party strikes me as tired, tired, tired. I am a member of the Coalition for a Democratic Majority, but it is a symptom of Democratic weariness that the co-

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chairmen of CDM—Senators Jackson and Moynihan, *my* kind of Democrats—should be so impermissibly permissive about the bid for the Presidency of Senator Kennedy, a man whose disqualifications are both ideological and trans-ideological.

So, I simply do not yet know what to do about my 1980 vote. I do not see how I can possibly support Brown, Kennedy, or Carter; I see no bright prospects for the Democratic party.

I have often thought about becoming a Republican and may well vote Republican in 1980. But I hesitate to become a Republican. Some of my reluctance is purely instinctual. I watch the national conventions on TV and am forever being forced to conclude that I just don't belong among those worthy folks. What is more, business is not my business and corporations are not my cup of tea. Finally, I am put off by a party that can have Connally's hostility to Israel on its respectable right wing and Percy's hostility to Israel on its respectable left wing.

WHAT choice, then, is left for me? I must become what I suppose I already am in part, a patient but intransigent independent who makes support for Israel a crucial precondition for granting his support. I do not think that this is merely a parochial Jewish stance, since the will of the West may well undergo its final testing as its support for Israel is tried. In general, I think that there is more to the issue of dual loyalty than we Jews have been willing to concede in the past, but at present there is no conflict whatsoever between my love of Israel and love of the United States. Both Israel and the United States are beleaguered liberal democracies with common enemies, and no liberal democracy has ever fought another liberal democracy.

Israel and the United States may, of course, come to experience increasing conflicts of national interest. I know that, and dread the possibility. I do not know what to do about it except to remain politically active on the one hand, while on the other hand pondering the Talmud's wisdom in counseling us to "seek no intimacy with the ruling powers."

Do I expect Jews as a group to undertake a reconsideration of their commitment to liberalism? I am a political scientist and the safest generalization about the predictions of political scientists is that they are always wrong, but I really do *not* expect such a reconsideration. I think that Jews will appear to be skittish for a while and then vote heavily Democratic in 1980. I find that prospect bleak, but these days I find almost all prospects for the future bleak. It will be a long wait for the Messiah.

WERNER J. DANNHAUSER *is professor of government at Cornell University and a former associate editor of* COMMENTARY.

Midge Decter: In a world full of ambiguities and puzzlements, one thing is absolutely easy both to define and locate: that is the Jewish interest. The continued security—and in those happy places where the term applies, well-being—of the Jews, worldwide, rests with a strong, vital, prosperous, self-confident United States.

With respect to Jews living in the United States, of course, the above proposition ought to be so self-evident as to defy mention. But with respect to the Jews living elsewhere, preeminently Israel and the Soviet Union, it is hardly less so. The Soviet Jews depend on the U.S. to press for and oversee the emigration of those who wish to leave and to keep the Russians at least a little nervous about what they do to those who remain. A U.S. the Soviets did not respect, or let us more accurately say, from whom they felt they had nothing to fear, would now cost many Russian Jewish lives (and many others as well). And as for Israel . . . well, much as one might wish that the Israelis had to depend only on themselves—God knows they have earned the right—it is not to be.

What connection has this to the question of American Jews and liberalism? (Perhaps we should just make a clean breast of things and refer instead to the attitudes and policies of the left wing of the Democratic party, for that is what we mean.) For many years now, the symposium statement says, most American Jews have taken for granted that their own interests coincided with the standard liberal agenda. The story, I believe, is somewhat more complicated than that; permit me to offer my version. For years American Jewish interests *did* coincide with the interests of American liberalism; for that liberalism was in domestic matters pluralistic, flexible, committed in principle, and growingly in practice, to large new opportunities for the meritorious—all conditions beneficial to Jews—and in foreign policy committed to strengthening the free world and containing the spread of Communist totalitarianism—it goes without saying, beneficial to Jews and a *sine qua non* for the establishment of Israel. Then two things happened: first, a number of highly privileged as well as highly visible Jews began to feel—it was precisely a mark of their newfound sense of security—that they were now called upon to transcend "mere" interest and be the wise prophets and legislators for mankind as a whole; and second (the exact degree of causal connection between these two phenomena I leave for others to calibrate), the liberal agenda itself began to change. "Change," indeed, is not the word; took a full one-hundred-and-eighty-degree turn would be a better description. Abandoning the old pluralism and flexibility, liberalism, too, became a fount of higher truth and prophecy, truth and prophecy naturally vouchsafed only to those select few who had proven themselves able to adjudicate the needs and rights of others. Domestically, this

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new liberalism proclaimed that American society was sunk in sin and would be required to make massive atonement, beginning with a denial of both virtue and value to the usual standards of meritorious performance and ending with nothing less than a reduction in the national standard of living. And in foreign affairs, the corresponding proclamation was that the United States was neither powerful enough nor morally creditable enough to continue to play its role as world leader.

Obviously this new kind of liberalism is not in the Jewish interest, and what is more, the Jews all know it. Whatever weakens America weakens them—it is as simple as that. (How this liberal revision got sold to the blacks as being more in *their* interest than the old growth-oriented, pluralistic merit system is a profoundly sad, possibly nasty, and certainly fateful story of our time—but one for another day.) Even those "beautiful of soul," as the Israelis so ironically and so aptly call them, who have "liberated" themselves from concern for the narrow Jewish interest and think instead about love and peace for all mankind, have done so in the serene and self-indulgent confidence that the U.S. will remain rich and strong and that others will look after the dirty details of power for them.

In any case, this new liberalism is bad for the Jews not only because it endorses quotas, has come to extend its highly selective tolerance to anti-Semitism, and regards the PLO (as it once regarded the Vietcong) as a worthy instrument for national self-chastisement. It is above all bad for the Jews because it is bad for the whole country. It has disrupted our delicate civic arrangements, it has distorted our political process, it has undermined our sense of life and tried (unsuccessfully, I believe) to devalue our love of country, it has apologized for crimes against us and our friends, it has taken satisfaction in our humiliation, and it is in general sapping our vitality.

I SENSE that the "reconsideration" the statement speaks of is already taking place in the Jewish community, no doubt accompanied by some degree of confusion. For among other things, the Jews are losing their home in the Democratic party, a loss that comes hard. Their identification with the old liberalism puts them now in that no-man's-land we call the Center, whose locale, and leadership, has not yet been settled on. I don't think that 1980 will be a problem for them, however. If, as now seems likely, the Democratic nomination goes either to Carter or to Kennedy, I predict a Republican landslide in which the Jews, along with hordes of others disgusted by the spectacle we have lately presented to the world, stoutly take part.

Would such a defection become permanent? Who knows? There is in the offing, if it is not too late, a renaissance of American power. If it comes, when it comes, party won't matter, for it will surely be bipartisan (unless the Democrats wish to commit suicide).

And we will all, Jews at the head of the line, cheer up. And some of us will promise never again to stray.

MIDGE DECTER *is national vice president of the Coalition for a Democratic Majority and a senior editor at Basic Books. Her books include* The Liberated Woman & Other Americans, The New Chastity, *and* Liberal Parents, Radical Children.

Joseph Epstein: I am a Jew who continues to think himself a liberal—of sorts. Until fairly recently, I must say, I have been a better liberal than Jew, at least from the standpoint of observance of ritual. I have never kept kosher but I often argued for the efficacy of strong central government; at no time did I ever attend synagogue regularly, but I never doubted the value of welfare programs and foreign aid. What would this make me? A Reform Jew and an orthodox liberal? Funny, I hear someone saying, he doesn't look liberal.

Yet my Jewishness—I do not say Judaism—and liberalism were early intertwined. Ours was not a particularly political family, but in my father's home Franklin Delano Roosevelt was a considerable hero, less for his Depression programs than for his internationalism, which is to say, for getting the United States to participate in a war whose backdrop was the slaughter of millions of European Jews. For the same reason that Roosevelt was a household god, the Chicago *Tribune*, with its publisher's isolationist position on the war, was not allowed past our door. Conveniently, the Chicago *Tribune* was Republican and right wing; FDR, Democratic and left wing. Even though I was only eight years old at the end of the war, this early political inoculation took and was to last some thirty years.

I can recall, the whole of my youth, only a single Jewish friend whose father was a Republican (he was on the board of directors of a small steel company, and, for what it is worth, was an observant Jew). But for the rest, Jews were Democrats, and hence liberals of one shade or another, with Jewish Republicans about as common as Jewish trapeze acts. Voting Democratic seemed a natural, almost a Jewish, thing to do, and here I must confess that I have yet to vote Republican, at any rate for the Presidency. Not that the Democrats have made it easy.

I voted, for example, for Hubert Humphrey in 1968, and secretly hoped he would not be elected. If he had been elected, I thought (and think still), he would have been unable to satisfy the altogeth-

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er unreal demands of the then rioting youth and the more strident blacks, and the result would have been to split the country even further apart. I believed that an unsympathetic figure such as Richard Nixon would be better for quieting things down—and, Watergate notwithstanding, so he, Nixon, proved: an instance, perhaps not all that rare in politics, of the wrong man showing up at the right time. Of course, nearly twenty years of Nixon-hating, another liberal ritual observance, made voting for him impossible for me. As soon ask an Orthodox Jew to wash down a pork chop with a nice glass of buttermilk.

My general point is the perhaps too obvious one that my liberalism had much of its origin in my being born a Jew. But Jewishness also, in a curious way, reinforced such radicalism as I felt in my twenties. As a young man with intellectual interests, one of my greatest intellectual passions was for the history of revolution, though, because I had fortunately happened upon the writings of Sidney Hook, I was never sympathetic to Communism in any form. Still, as an intellectual, I took a certain unearned pride in the fact that so many revolutionary intellectuals—Trotsky, Eduard Bernstein, Karl Kautsky, Rosa Luxemburg, even the anti-Semitic Karl Marx himself—were Jews. I used to wonder how it was that Lenin was not a Jew. Where once I thought these men and women a heroic lot, I now think them—apart from the intrinsic interest of their individual lives—in no way worthy of admiration. The sum of their efforts has been greatly to add to the misery in the world.

The archetypal story of the Jews and the Left is told in I. J. Singer's magnificent novel, *The Brothers Ashkenazi*. In that novel, it will be recalled, young Jewish intellectuals help organize a revolt among workers whose energies end by being turned into a pogrom against the Jews of Lublin. So on a broader scale I now think that all the liberal arguments put forth by Jews such as myself in favor of the United Nations seem to have resulted in the UN resolution declaring Zionism a form of racism. I think, too, of all the old liberal arguments in favor of foreign aid to Third World nations, and of how today almost all these nations, the great majority of them led by clownish or malevolent men, are lined up against Israel. Again, the advancement of minorities, which has traditionally been a goal of Jewish liberals, is now to be brought about through quotas, chiefly at the expense of Jews. As with the young Jewish revolutionaries of Lublin, so with the Jewish liberals in the United States, so much of what they have worked for they have lived to see redound against demonstrably Jewish interests.

I TEND to agree, then, with what I take to be the underlying assumption of this symposium: that a strong contradiction is now apparent between being a Jew and being a certain kind of liberal—the kind of liberal, specifically, that Edward Shils has called "collectivistic." Shils's collectivistic liberal believes above all in the collectivity, and from this it follows that he believes in as large a role as possible for government. (Because he expects so much from government, all governments disappoint him, and so his politics have a strong antinomian caste.) He believes that the Russian revolution, the great hope of mankind, was moving along nicely till Stalin came to leadership. He still yearns for socialism, in a vague way—and vague it must remain, since socialism has nearly everywhere proved disappointing, if not disastrous.

If the radical's chief political emotion tends to be that of rancor, that of the collectivistic liberal tends to be that of guilt. His is usually, though, guilt before the fact: the one thing he fears perhaps above all is that he should seem ungenerous in his opinions. It is this that forces him to stand weakly by while those who call themselves the "oppressed" say and do the most horrendous things, from acts of terrorism *à la* the PLO to the sillier rhetorical flourishes of those segments of the gay, feminist, and black movements that are at bottom separatist. It is his guilt, too, that allows him to believe—against all evidence—that everyone is created equal, and, believing this, to encourage the alteration of social arrangements—in the form of affirmative action, as quotas are called—in the name of this false premise. (A premise not to be confused with what seems to me a truer and more humane premise—that everyone is to be equally valued.) Standards may drop, quality may disappear, he, the collectivistic liberal, understands this, is willing to risk it, even if need be to accept it. He is a dreamy fellow, ready to pay all claims of injustice, past and present, real and imagined, while awaiting utopia.

FROM this portrait of the collectivistic liberal, I gather it will be sufficiently clear that I believe the ideas and notions I attribute to him ought to be discarded as soon as possible. Yet, be all this as it may, I still insist on thinking myself a liberal. I know that it has become fashionable among those the press has come to call neoconservative to speak of the politics of self-interest, and to quote James Madison in its behalf. But I do not think that self-interest needs the support of James Madison; it will take care of itself very nicely, as it always has. I think that liberalism has traditionally had a certain large-heartedness that is worth retaining; it is chiefly its old soft-headedness that needs to be lopped off.

Similarly, liberalism has for the most part been admirable in its emphasis on the importance of civil liberties and civil rights and those crucial principles which, taken together, comprise democracy. It is not that any respectable kind of conservatism wishes to rescind any of these principles, but liberalism has insisted upon them—and I think there is real value in its doing so. The point

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is not without significance for Jews. I know that it is both as a liberal and as a Jew that I care about the future of Israel. As a Jew, I care about Israel for reasons both tribal and self-interested. "Of all men," the Zionist and historian Sir Lewis Namier wrote, "the Jew alone has to account for his presence, and he who can be called upon to justify that, stands condemned before he is judged." The presence of Israel, Namier knew, made it no longer necessary for the Jew in the Diaspora to account for his presence in the same way. Hence its importance to all Jews. As a liberal, I care about Israel because I care about democracy—and about democracies in a world in which they are becoming fewer and fewer. Israel, in fact, is a chilling example of where the politics of self-interest can have a deadly effect. Non-liberals who are also non-Jews cannot be expected to have the same self-interest in the survival of Israel that I, a liberal and a Jew, do. Is it not—as some American politicians are already hinting it is—in America's self-interest to abandon Israel and go for the oil?

Now, not having responded very precisely to the opening statement, allow me to go on to ignore almost completely the questions posed by the editors. Although some of these questions offer a true temptation to punditry, I think I had better back off. My guess is that the Jewish community in general—here I must own up to not knowing it very well in particular—will vote in 1980 roughly as I shall, making the best possible compromise between my traditional liberalism and what I construe to be my self-interest. As for any significant movement away from the Democratic party in 1980 on the part of Jews, I suspect that the Republicans, as usual, will do their best to block off that possibility. Not that, for me, the Democrats seem very promising. I see no reason to reward President Carter's drab performance with my vote; Kennedy, the great white hope of the proponents of collectivistic liberalism, I do not consider a reasonable alternative. The front-running Republicans seem, at the moment, no better. First there is John Connally, whose self-interest, though well developed, certainly isn't my self-interest; then there is Ronald Reagan, who often gives artful expression to the belligerence that I myself too often feel nowadays against the world but still know ought to be repressed. In sum, I think you will be able to recognize me on election day again this year. I shall be the fellow who comes out of the voting booth frowning.

JOSEPH EPSTEIN *is the editor of the* American Scholar *and the author of a recent collection of essays,* Familiar Territory: Observations on American Life.

Leonard Fein: The alleged anatomical deficiencies of liberals are well known: hearts that bleed, knees that jerk, absent guts. But it is time to turn the other chic. The hard noses of the New Right sniff away, but all they smell is smoke; their unblinking eyeballs see only straw men.

I do not recognize the "recent developments" which frame the symposium question. The "widespread support" among liberals for quotas? None at all for quotas; widespread, perhaps, for affirmative action, but very, very shallow. Nor does such support as liberals lend to affirmative-action programs put them at odds with the Jews; the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council, the umbrella organization of American Jewry for such matters, endorses affirmative action, as does each of its member agencies. The "diminishing enthusiasm among liberals for Israel"? Which liberals? Is Ramsey Clark still thought a liberal? Is he more representative than Tom Hayden or Lane Kirkland, whose enthusiasm is undiminished? Is not the fate of the recent Stevenson amendment, which sought to reduce Israel's foreign-aid allocation by $100 million—and which received a total of seven supporting votes in the Senate—a better test of liberal support for Israel? And if there has been some attrition in that support, is the attrition not more readily explained by the policies of Israel's right-wing government than by alleging a liberal romance with the PLO? Where is the evidence that there is growing sympathy for the PLO among American liberals? Jewish and non-Jewish liberals in this country continue to discriminate sharply between the Palestinians and the PLO; the recent New Outlook conference in Washington, where the American participants invited the criticism of some of their more radical Israeli colleagues by insisting on the distinction, attests the stance of liberals on the matter. And who are the liberals that failed to protest the anti-Semitism that followed on Andrew Young's resignation? The general liberal response was deep disappointment at the unhappy circumstances and the ugly consequences; Jewish liberals, for their part, have rarely behaved with such solid self-respect. There was no effort to plead with the blacks for forgiveness, no sign of groveling. The Jews stood firm and unapologetic, behaved quite sensibly, and, as a result, helped restore the relationship with liberal black organizations.

JEWISH liberals are, indeed, in crisis, but not for the reasons cited in the symposium statement. They are in crisis because liberalism is in crisis, not because there are important differences between Jewish interests and liberal interests. There are no such differences; the allegation that there are implies a misunderstanding of Jewish interests as liberals define those interests.

American Jews—and South African Jews and English Jews and French Jews and German Jews,

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in their day—supported liberal parties and programs. The original calculus of Jewish self-interest was straightforward: the parties of the Right were anti-Semitic. In the United States, a variety of additional circumstances promoted the association of Jews with liberalism, and with its principal vehicle, the Democratic party: Roosevelt fought the Nazis, Truman recognized Israel; the Democrats managed the cities, where Jews lived; the Republicans were isolationists. Over time, the association became self-sustaining; Jews came to positions of influence and power in the Democratic party, and enjoyed the fruits of their investment in that party.

But more than a politics of self-interest and of kindred disposition is here involved. The Progressive party in South Africa is hardly a vehicle for the promotion of Jewish self-interest, and the party of Ernest Bevin in England might be thought less naturally congenial to Jews than the party of Winston Churchill. Yet the Jews support these liberal parties there as they do here. Self-interest conventionally understood does not provide an adequate explanation for this widespread and enduring phenomenon. No, the explanation is, first, that Jewish liberals are still, obstinately, seized of a notion of social justice that will not give them rest, and, second, that Jewish liberals still believe that Jews are safest where the social peace is stablest, and that the social peace is best assured by the politics of amelioration which has been the program of the moderate Left in the West for decades.

That is hardly a straightforward calculus. It is a complex assessment, a graft of social theory, moral passion, and political conception; it results in a politics of conviction rather than convenience. Jews do not expect to benefit directly from the welfare programs they endorse or from the tax policies they support. But they do expect that a politics of equity is both the right thing to do and the best defense against chaos, and it is chaos that Jews fear.

THE symposium statement confuses liberal programs with the wildness of the New Left. Liberals have enough authentic confusions of their own without having these smears imposed upon them. We are confused, for example, about the Soviet Union. The classic liberal position was the soft line. But after Budapest and Prague, and especially after the crudeness of Soviet behavior in the Middle East—to say nothing of Shcharansky—the old instinct does not serve. There is, simply, no liberal consensus on this, the most significant component of our foreign policy.

Nor can much be said for the liberal consensus on domestic policy. The post-Great Society disillusionment with large-scale government programs continues, and we still do not know whether the replacement of naive faith in the utility of government intervention by skepticism regarding the benefits of such intervention is a step toward maturity or toward emptiness.

And there are issues where we suffer less from confusion than from a sense of failure. The most notable of these is the matter of crime—an issue, incidentally, which touches many more Jews than affirmative action does. (Whatever the merits of affirmative-action programs, it is almost surely the case that Jews suffer less dislocation as a result of those programs than almost any other group in American society. The places the minorities in their largest numbers are getting are rarely the places Jews want to be.) Liberal programs for dealing with crime appear to have been useless, and there is little satisfaction in knowing that illiberal programs have worked no better.

So there is a liberal crisis, one which touches both Jewish and non-Jewish liberals in equal measure. But the consequence is hardly a Jewish turn to the Right. Save for the pages of COMMENTARY, there is no evidence of such a turn; the much-heralded neoconservatism has won attention rather than recruits. Disappointed Jewish liberals have simply dropped out of political activity. They remain committed to traditional liberal goals, but are deeply uncertain as to how those goals may best be pursued. They remain disposed to vote against their private economic interest for the sake of the greater good, but the zest is no longer there. It is hard to work up a feeling of large ambition in a domain which is so filled with lies and postures, in a domain where the best and the brightest provoke disasters, in a domain so muddled as our government appears to be. And we are still exhausted from the traumas of the last decade. It will take some time, and some experience of success, and some new ideas, and some people who can articulate those ideas persuasively before we gallop off once more. But that is very different from suggesting that a major reconsideration of the Jewish commitment to liberalism is under way. Issue by issue, there is debate and there is change. That is as it should be and as it has been: liberals rarely conform to the mindless caricatures which their opponents so delight in limning.

The liberal predilection remains intact, and sometimes even passionate, and there is even some fun in the offing: the new conservatives surely make worthier adversaries than their predecessors. One wishes only that they were a bit less predictable; these days, while liberal reflexes are badly dulled, it is the right knee that jerks with dreary regularity; the promise of freshness is most unevenly fulfilled, and what poses as criticism is too often just crankiness.

LEONARD FEIN *is the editor of* Moment.

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Carl Gershman: I disagree with the suggestion that American Jews are only now questioning their commitment to what is called the "standard liberal agenda." The reconsideration of the traditional Jewish commitment to liberalism, which COMMENTARY anticipated and has reflected in its pages, has been under way for about a decade. The only new development is that some recent events—the Andrew Young affair above all—have posed the issues that are distressing Jews more sharply than ever before.

The problem grows out of the fact that the liberal agenda which once served Jewish interests now threatens them—not because Jews or their interests have changed but because liberalism has. The two fundamental tenets of the old liberalism, equality of opportunity and anti-Communism, have quite literally been turned on their heads by the new liberalism. Accordingly, "true" equality, now defined as equality of reward for all ethnic groups, requires *inequality of opportunity* for individuals, since fair competition based on merit must not be allowed to produce unequal group results. Similarly, in the post-Vietnam era, liberal anti-Communism has given way to the principle of anti-anti-Communism and to the advocacy of American retrenchment abroad.

All this is well known. The relevant point for this discussion is that on both counts Jewish interests have clashed with the new liberalism. Whatever else might be said about the unconstitutionality of quotas or their harmful effects on educational and work standards and on the fabric of democratic society, the simple fact is that quotas inevitably hurt Jews because they amount to a discriminatory restriction on the oportunity of Jews to advance in American society. It is just as clear that liberal isolationism is bad for Israel, which needs a strong America to deter the Soviet Union and to maintain a military and political equilibrium in the Middle East.

For a time, many Jews refused to see any contradiction between Jewish interests and the new liberalism. They not only identified with the new liberalism but helped provide leadership for the McGovern movement and similar political tendencies. Some continue to do so, and many Jews still retain an emotional attachment to "liberalism." But the realities of the situation have badly strained these loyalties. For every Bella Abzug or Elizabeth Holtzman or Stephen Solarz, there are many other Jews who are beginning to wonder how Jewish interests are served by the sacrifice of the merit principle or the abdication of American power and responsibility abroad. What the Young affair showed is that Jews can't eat their cake and have it. They were attacked because, as Jews, they stood in the way of the new liberal agenda.

But it is not only Jews who stand in the way of this agenda; America does, too, at least the *idea* of America as a good society. The new liberalism, it will be remembered, did not spring full-blown into the world, but emerged during a period of protest against America. Quotas and isolationism represent two expressions of the idea that America is an unworthy society guilty of having committed egregious wrongs against both its own citizens (to whom reparations are now due) and foreign nations (which are to be spared the exercise of American power). In a word, the new liberalism called upon America to do penance for its sins.

There can be little doubt that the rhetoric of self-flagellation is wearing thin at a time when America is being subjected to humiliating assault by fanatic mullahs. But while the new liberalism finds little resonance for its ideas among the American people, it is well entrenched in key sectors of our society and is hardly about to concede defeat. One has only to consider for a moment that all three candidates now competing for the Democratic presidential nomination, while coming from different regions of the country, are cut from the same new-liberal cloth.

HAVING said this, though, I would add that we are living in a time of momentous events which could produce unanticipated changes in American politics. The political tendency that is most amenable to Jewish interests—the liberalism, if you will, of Senators Jackson and Moynihan—retains a position of influence in the Democratic party, and it would be premature and possibly very short-sighted to conclude that it cannot regain the ascendancy. In any event, Jews should want to see this tendency revive, and not just because this would serve their immediate political interests. The country is now entering one of the most difficult periods in its history, above all with respect to foreign policy, and it is hard to see how we will be able to manage without something approaching a national consensus in favor of reversing the decline of American power. Such a consensus is not possible without a clear repudiation of isolationism by the Democrats.

The political challenge facing American Jews today would not be so formidable if they were just being asked to accept or reject liberalism. In fact, the real challenge is to promote the revival of a sense of national cohesion and purpose. Because Jewish and American needs coincide in so many important respects (for precisely the same reason that Jews lack a common ground with the new liberalism), Jews can help meet the challenge to America in the course of defending their own interests. By the same token, these interests must be understood in the broad context as consistent with the well-being of America and the future of democracy.

CARL GERSHMAN *is executive director of Social Democrats USA.*

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Nathan Glazer: The Jewish-black alliance, as well as the Jewish connection with the liberal mainstream of the Democratic party, have been breaking up now, one way or another, for a long time. But it is surprising how long it takes any political connection to break up, and how long people stick with alliances that no longer, it would seem, reflect their interests. So, I would say, yes, Jews are shifting away from the "standard liberal agenda" and the alliance with blacks, but it is premature to expect many Jews to start voting Republican in presidential elections. And perhaps, even as they notice that one kind of interest no longer binds them to blacks, or to Democrats, they may find that other interests still keep them from turning to the Republicans.

The interests that make the Democratic and black connection anachronistic are economic interests. But contradictions between Jewish economic interests and the standard liberal agenda have been evident now for some twenty-five years and have not yet done much to move the mass of American Jews away from their willingness to support candidates who promote that agenda. Jews have for decades numbered relatively few workers, so they shouldn't have cared about strengthening trade unions. There has been almost no Jewish lower class, so they shouldn't have cared about welfare. It's true that since Jews are such an aged population they want more social security and Medicare, and this is one interest that still links them to the liberal agenda, but that doesn't amount to much when one considers the interests that should lead them to oppose that agenda. Jews have been, disproportionately, businessmen and self-employed professionals, who are also small businessmen. They should have been against higher taxes and government spending, for tax breaks to business, against government regulation of business. But whatever the promptings of their *economic* interests, Jews have supported the party that wants to increase government spending, expand benefits to the poor and lower classes, impose greater regulations on business, support the power of organized labor.

Clearly for Jews there has been no one-to-one connection between economic interests and political positions, and the reason is that Jews have more than economic interests that can be read off from their occupations and incomes at any particular time. They have a more basic interest in Jewish security, and from this basic interest yet other interests arise—ideological interests, if you will, which give them a picture of the world and tell them in what kind of world they would be most secure. It is the security interests and the ideology that has developed around them that keep most Jews securely connected to the moderate Left, and while there have been some blows and shocks to this connection, increasing since 1967, I don't think most Jews are yet convinced it is time for a basic change.

Beneath the cruder pocketbook concerns that activate other groups (as well as, of course, Jews), Jews must worry about anti-Semitism and the safety of Israel. Anti-Semitism does not seem much of an issue now, but it is a constant concern, and it may be strengthened as frustration over gasoline shortages and economic failure rises. The American people, amazingly enough, still don't believe there's a "real" shortage. Up till now they seem to have been willing to blame the oil companies for their discomfort, but the kind of irrationality that prevents the recognition of the most obvious reality may turn against Jews, who so demonstratively support Israel. When it comes to anti-Semitism, and despite the vagaries of the New Left, Jews feel safer with Democrats. And it doesn't affect this feeling to argue—and one could from public-opinion polls—that blacks are more anti-Jewish than white small-town Protestants and big business, the typical supporters of the Republican party. A long history makes Jews more comfortable with the typical Democratic presidential candidate than with the typical Republican candidate. The Democrats, after all, are the party of the big cities and the minorities. (In this sense, McGovern and Carter were not "typical" Democratic candidates.) The automatic Jewish assumption has also been that the Democrats will be "safer" on Israel, but this has been weakening—there did not seem to be much difference between McGovern and Nixon, and Ford and Carter. But Connally's recent statement will send many Jews who were tempted by the Republicans scurrying back to the Democratic fold.

SECURITY interests have for two decades been outweighing economic interests. And so, two questions: Should they? And if they should, does that mean that Democrats deserve Jewish trust more than Republicans?

On the first, the answer is clear: yes, security interests should outweigh economic interests. Jews can afford to be somewhat less prosperous if that means a more stable society with less danger of anti-Semitism and a solider American commitment to Israel's security. But on the second question—I simply am not so sure. Both parties are changing (they always do). Both are fairly close to each other in major policies (and even closer to each other in their actual policies when in office).

The ideal Jewish choice, of course, is the conservative Democrat—one who is immune to the New Left animus against Israel abroad and businessmen at home, and who is firm in his commitment to Israel's security. (Of course, we understand by "conservative" Democrat today the former "liberal" Democrat of the 1950's and early 1960's, displaced from his central position by the turmoil of the late 1960's.)

A shift all the way to the Republicans would be too hard to expect of most Jews: it takes a long time to change political habits, and maybe there

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are good underlying gut reasons why they are not changing. But the conservative Democrat in the tradition of Hubert Humphrey would be ideal —if he had a chance.

NATHAN GLAZER, *professor of education and sociology at Harvard and co-editor of the* Public Interest, *is the author of many books, including* Affirmative Discrimination, American Judaism, *and, with Daniel P. Moynihan,* Beyond the Melting Pot.

Ben Halpern: COMMENTARY has framed the question for this symposium in a way that reminds me how times have changed, even if I, and my views, have not. My own "thinking as a Jew"—and as a Labor Zionist —never assumed that the Jewish interest coincided with any standard liberal agenda. The divergence always struck me as more significant, even before the liberal agenda changed. What has also changed is the willingness of old-line Jewish liberals like the editors of COMMENTARY to speak about Jewish interests as an accepted, obvious fact of American politics.

The "anti-Semitism that surfaced in the wake of Andrew Young's resignation" consists essentially in the refusal to recognize Jewish interests as legitimate in American politics—or, for that matter, in general. One of the hurtful accusations some black leaders hurled against Jews after Young's resignation was that Jewish participation in the civil-rights struggle had not been altruistic but a matter of self-interest. The implication is that black self-interest in the civil-rights struggle —or, for that matter, in Andrew Young's career— not only is legitimate in itself, but legitimates Jewish political activity; whereas Jewish political activity in the Jews' own interest is not only illegitimate special pleading but justifies the suspicion of "dual loyalty." There was a day when Jews themselves shared such views in America, and it is a heartening sign of the times to see Jewish interests taken for granted as a legitimate object of political action.

While I must oppose every suggestion, from whatever quarter, that denies Jews the equal right to act politically in their own interest, this alone does not suffice to define a political orientation. Jews as well as blacks, and—to be more current, as well as more pertinent—the neo-Republican John Connally as well as political activists on the Left, have labeled Jewish political action on behalf of Israel a disservice to American interests (identifying American interests, often enough, with their own). To the extent that my Jewish concerns have influenced my voting behavior, I have found myself in great difficulty during several past elections finding any candidate worth supporting. Since my other concerns lead to much the same conclusion, I have tended to opt out of the whole process, and if I can judge by myself, a considerable part of the Jewish electorate would like to do the same, if they could break the habit.

Also, I like to distinguish between the Jewish interest and the interests of Jews. Defending the security of Israel belongs to the Jewish interest because, in my opinion, Jewishness becomes increasingly problematic under the condition of life as a minority. As I remarked above, this consideration does not suffice to give an unequivocal direction to American Jewish political action; for American politicians of every description are more or less equally inclined to make fair campaign promises in favor of the Jewish interest and to disregard them after the election.

The other development referred to, the "widespread support among liberals for quotas," does not belong as clearly to the Jewish interest: i.e., the interest defined by the appropriate direction desired for the future of Jews as an ethnic entity. It is far from certain that as a group we have benefited from the predilection of Jews, whether American, Russian, or Iranian, for high-status, high-income occupations. Nevertheless, we are obliged to defend the interests of Jews and defend their rights to equality of opportunity whatever the ill effects, or dubious advantage, from a more general point of view.

In the same way, the black consensus is bound to defend the career interests and ambitions of its Andrew Youngs and Jesse Jacksons, however little the real group interest is involved in their overtures to the PLO. Status is involved in both the black and the Jewish case, and for groups still denied, or only recently granted, equality or equal opportunity, threats to status are danger signals to which they are highly sensitive. Blacks see racism in any resistance to the status they seek and Jews see anti-Semitism in any attempt to deprive them of the status they have achieved; and in both cases what is perceived as racism or anti-Semitism has a decisive impact on the political response of the group affected.

BLACKS and Jews have supported the Democratic party coalition more steadily and more decisively than any other element in it, even though not they but Southern Wasps and the Catholic ethnics of the big cities control it. Both Jews and blacks have cause to complain that their interests have been neglected by the coalition; and if it were a true coalition, a specific compact among organized and cohesive groups, there might have to be some hard bargaining before it could be reconstituted. But as there are no such effectively organized communal organizations, neither Jewish nor black, any bargaining done will take into account primarily the career chances of leaders

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who serve as symbols of group interests, not their authorized advocates. Beyond that, voting patterns will again reflect the unreflective, habitual, or emotive responses of those who vote, based on the image projected by one or another candidate.

If we can rely on poll findings, we may expect both Jews and blacks to vote for the Democratic coalition and the liberal agenda. But it is not certain that we can indeed rely on the polls. The patterns of past voting may still represent the intentions poll respondents are ready to report, but the undercurrents of dissatisfaction, which have been evident in several past elections, are capable of breaking through without prior signals in the polls. This time might well be the time when the long anticipated realignment of Jewish votes to accord with Jewish social-economic class distribution actually occurs; depending, of course, on the candidates chosen by the parties and the propensity of Jewish voters to identify with, or against, the image they present to the electorate.

BEN HALPERN *is professor of Jewish history at Brandeis University and the author of, among other works,* The Idea of the Jewish State *and* Jews and Blacks: The Classic American Minorities.

Oscar Handlin: The times call for a reconsideration. Indeed it may be too late. Viewed in retrospect, the standard liberal agenda as defined in the 1930's did not prove wanting; but Jews and other Americans drifted away from it unreflectively and without awareness of the consequences. The objectives of Louis D. Brandeis, Herbert Lehman, and Louis Marshall were appropriate to generations close to their immigrant origins, alive to the uses of power, and conscious of the realities of working-class life within which most Jews still found themselves before 1940. With affluence and the shift into professional and para-intellectual occupations, reality receded, transforming liberalism from a hard, often painful, array of commitments into a soft, comforting bundle of nostalgic sentiments. Three changes, among others, illustrate the distortion of the standard liberal agenda.

Freedom into permissiveness. Fifty years ago, the liberal agenda included measures to free individuals and groups from irrational restraints inherited from the past and serving the interests or prejudices of the privileged. Discrimination, censorship, and inequality of opportunity were among the visible targets, against which broad sectors of the politically active mobilized. But the liberals of John Dewey's generation never believed that success in those efforts would lead to the disappearance of all restraints and responsibilities. Perhaps naively, perhaps with undue optimism, they expected the elimination of the old to make room for new, voluntarily generated, rational, progressive relationships between the individual and the community, with standards of behavior even stricter than in the past because attuned to present needs. Repeal of Prohibition would reduce drunkenness, free speech would promote sober discussion and high literary art while discouraging pornography, enlightened divorce laws would strengthen the family, and equal opportunity would bring merit to the fore. The distinction between ends and means was clear in anticipation.

Alas, not in the general development! All those careful distinctions vanished with the tidal flow of material objects which swept across the American landscape after 1950. The abandonment of old restraints too often meant the abandonment of all restraints. In a culture increasingly devoted to sensation, gratification of immediate wants became the supreme, often the sole, criterion of good; and individuals devoted to mindless egocentric hedonism spared little thought for what they owed their neighbors. Little-used faculties shrank from the intellectual effort needed to distinguish between the freedom to publish *Ulysses* and the freedom to exhibit *Deep Throat*, between divorce as a recourse against intolerable abuse and the "split kit" that permitted separation at whim. And in the end, of course, self-indulgence without reference to responsibilities to others only deepened the frustration of some and drove others to cultist obscurantism.

Jews were not quicker to embrace the new ways of life than other peoples of the same income levels and places of residence. But since Jews were heavily concentrated in the cities and the occupations most susceptible to the new trends, they were particularly prominent among the protagonists, and especially when so identified in the most popular cultural media—novels, television, movies. More important, family structure and religious identity, the historic defenses against analogous trends in the past, did not now protect Jews. Neither the well-defined traditional hostility to epicureanism, nor the insistence upon the purposeful character and the connectedness of human experience saved many from surrender to the temptations of immediate sensation. For them as for others, freedom ceased to be deliberate rational choice, became indiscriminate yielding to impulse.

From moral decision to utopianism. Anyone can vote for the angels against the devils. Such is not usually the choice presented. Much more real and much more difficult is the need to decide between more-than-less good and less-than-more evil. Brandeis, like Dewey, was against war, but in 1917 supported Wilson against the Kaiser.

Somewhere liberals lost the ability to make that kind of choice. Survey the gallery of their overseas villains since 1950—from Syngman Rhee to

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the Shah of Iran. Ask: are they really worse than the genuine, the only alternatives—from Kim Il Sung to the Ayatollah Khomeini? Few Americans would answer in the affirmative.

The passionate condemnation lavished on the rogues was utopian. No consideration of the best available, of as good as possible under the circumstances, could stand against an abstract standard detached from time and place. To affirm the absolute virtue of a peace-loving, humane, liberal democracy in Iran in 1978 or in Korea in 1951 was beside the point and obscured the actual choice—between Kim and Rhee, between the Shah and the Ayatollah. And Jews who showed no more ability to make these distinctions than did other liberals of the 1960's and 1970's will also find it increasingly difficult to explain that the choice in the Middle East is not between peace-seeking refugees and belligerent Beginites, for again the application of utopian standards to the imperfections of one side conceals the width of the distance from the other.

Away from universalism. No change has been as curious and as abrupt. Even in the relatively isolationist 1930's, liberals believed in the unity of the human kind, in the interdependence of people everywhere, and in the convergence of various social and political forms and values. By the 1940's the rhetoric of one world was commonplace. Basic to this faith was the understanding that men and women everywhere were so alike that common norms, values, and expectations applied to them all.

It was true, of course, that cultural circumstances produced differences in practice. The swaddled Russian babies, anthropologists explained, were predisposed to authoritarianism; the German father image, psychologists pointed out, produced an obsession with order. Never mind. In time, convergence would bring them all together.

The evidence of the 1950's and 1960's was encouraging. Despite all the impedimenta of its culture, Japan evolved into a Western democracy. Russian babies, swaddled or not, grew up contributors to *samizdat*; and liberal values survived under adverse circumstances in East Germany, Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia. And in the 1970's we learned that despite the warnings of the experts about the weight of Confucianism, those same values splashed across the wall posters at the first lifting of Maoist repression. One would imagine that faith in universalism would never be stronger than now.

Not so fast! In fact, the application of identical standards and expectations around the world required a fortitude liberalism had lost. Neutralism bred habits of apology for regimes people did not wish to resist. Castro promised an election within six months; but Cubans had no interest in formal democracy, or Angolans, or Ethiopians—for that matter almost none of the liberated colonies. Nor in personal or intellectual freedom. The norms of laws and behavior valid for the United States and its allies somehow did not apply to people elsewhere; a common standard would have called for disturbing judgments and actions. Pictures of the boat people or of starving Cambodians evoked pity; but liberals sedulously refrained from reflecting about the regimes which produced those results. The implications were too uncomfortable to contemplate. If those wretched victims were of the same clay as we, did they not deserve what we desire, bread but also liberty?

Again, Jews did not differ from their peers. They should have, not only by virtue of what they should have learned from the Holocaust, not only from their stake overseas in Israel, but also from the prophetic faith in the brotherhood of man and fatherhood of God. At this late date in the 20th century it will take a traumatic shock to remind them of their heritage as Jews and as Americans.

OSCAR HANDLIN *is Carl H. Pforzheimer University Professor and director of the University Library at Harvard. Among his numerous books are* The Uprooted, Boston's Immigrants, *and* Truth in History.

Rita E. Hauser: In addition to the disturbing developments cited in the questions posed by this symposium, which have surely enforced my prior thinking that the Jewish liberal in America has lost his political bearings, I have found myself for some years unable to answer an even more fundamental question: why has the Jewish liberal been in the vanguard of certain so-called reforms which, if enacted, would serve to diminish most considerably the influence American Jews could bring to bear on the political process? If American Jews collectively were stripped of political power, then it would matter very little indeed where they stood on any issue since, *in toto*, Jews represent a small percentage of the total voting electorate.

The first such "reform" has already been felt. The limitation on campaign contributions in federal elections to $1,000 per candidate has eliminated the strongest weapon the Jewish community exercised in influencing the selection of nominees in both political parties. John Connally could risk alienating Jewish Republicans by a profoundly anti-Israel position taken very early in the campaign season because, among other things, there were no heavy Jewish contributors weighing in, as was the case in the Nixon and Ford campaigns. Jewish liberal "reformers" were in the vanguard of those who supported this limitation on campaign contributions, perhaps ashamed of how money, yes, Jewish money, could count in the precarious days which mark the beginnings of any candidate's venture.

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Jewish liberals have also been in the forefront of those seeking, happily without success thus far, to eliminate the electoral college and replace it with a one-man/one-vote system which would reduce Jewish interests and issues for any presidential candidate to a bare minimum. Jewish votes matter because Jews are concentrated in states with the highest electoral count and, in a tight national election, such as the Ford-Carter race, a swing of just 1 or 2 per cent of the Jewish vote is the difference between victory and defeat. No presidential candidate in 1980 can afford to alienate a sizable percentage of the Jewish vote since there is no way he can win what will surely be a close election without a minimum 20-25 per cent of this vote in the key states.

JEWISH liberals who support these "reforms," who excuse black anti-Semitism, and who argue for a PLO-dominated state on the West Bank, must somehow believe they, and Jews in general, will be rewarded for their "good deeds" and moral stance at such time when Jewish political power in America is insignificant and when Israel will be in a position of strategic weakness. Since history teaches that political reality denies influence to those who are unable to exercise it, Jewish liberals who work for the diminishment of Jewish political power are dangerous people indeed. Many clear-headed Jews have moved away from such folly and now are able and willing to support Republican candidates, as well as more conservative Democrats. They understand that the first commitment of Jews today is to Jewish survival, and not to any outmoded dogma which does not seek to insure that aim. An intelligent Jewish voter really asks himself first and foremost that ancient question, "Is it good for the Jews?" Many Jews did not like Nixon, but in view of their perception that McGovern was indeed bad for the Jews, bad for Israel, and bad for America, over 35 per cent of them voted for Nixon in 1972. Despite Watergate, if that election were replayed today, the outcome, in my opinion, would be the same. Most Jews are intelligent enough to know that the standard liberal agenda no longer serves them well.

RITA E. HAUSER *is an attorney practicing in New York City and a prominent Republican.*

Nat Hentoff: To begin with the last question, if there were to be a "significant movement away from the Democratic party in 1980," where would Jews go? To a Republican party headed by that sturdy friend of the Jews (and Israel), John Connally? Or Ronald Reagan from the 19th century? Or George Bush from the CIA? Or the slippery Howard Baker? And whoever the Republicans choose will surely receive bountiful support, implicitly *quid pro quo,* from those other notable friends of the Jews (and Israel), the oil companies. As a believer in the notion of the *"yiddisher kop,"* it is difficult for me to envision many Jews making a move in that direction.

As for a reconsideration by the Jewish community of its traditional commitment to liberalism —to the end, perhaps, of trying to form a neoconservative swing bloc within the Democratic party in alliance with others of similar views—I assume COMMENTARY means an abandonment of much of the social-welfare programs on the "standard liberal agenda." But how would this be good for the Jews? If there is yet more unemployment, even worse health care for the poor, the working class, and part of the middle class, what do backsliding, ex-liberal Jews gain? Except enmity, and justifiedly so—along with all other conservatives and neoconservatives. Aside from my persistent conviction that Jews care about justice, and not only for themselves, this turn to the Right makes no sense.

There is a somewhat more complex problem in turning from liberalism. Fundamental to my definition of that often foggy term is an addiction to civil liberties. Admittedly, some conservatives are more dependable than many liberals on these matters; but by and large, the Bill of Rights is more often in danger when anti-liberals are in power. So, if sizable numbers of Jews are to move to the Right, we'll all be in trouble. *Goyim* too. On the other hand, I gloomily concede that if Edward Kennedy is the Democratic nominee, civil libertarians will have a difficult choice between voting Democratic or not voting at all. This shepherd of the grandson of S.1—yet another Kennedy version of the Criminal Code Reform Bill—has again enthusiastically demonstrated his denotative ignorance of constitutional liberties.

Still, even if Kennedy is elected, Jews who care about such things as the First and Fourth Amendments can be a good deal more effective in fighting off raids on the Constitution by joining with traditional liberal allies than in trying to gain converts among heathens elsewhere.

With regard to quotas, I am not that sure—having insufficient evidence and having been given none in the symposium statement—that there is widespread support among liberals for quotas. Which liberals? And is support of affirmative action always synonymous with support of quotas? In the *DeFunis* case, William O. Douglas did not think so. Indeed, from what I remember of recent polls, there are divisions among blacks on the matter of quotas.

But let us suppose, for the sake of argument,

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that this particular COMMENTARY statement is based on real evidence. For those Jews opposed to quotas, what is the alternative—aside from holding one's ground and trying to keep on making a constitutional case for that view? If Jews are to base future alliances on such criteria as whether their putative new associates are against quotas, consider the quicksands this will get Jews into. So John Connally and the rest of the Republican candidates are, so far as I know, against quotas. How much else on *their* agenda can Jews subscribe to?

THE statement also contains an indictment of liberals for the paucity of their protest "against the anti-Semitism that surfaced in the wake of Andrew Young's resignation." It seemed to me that quite a few voices were raised. For one example, in the *Village Voice,* hardly known as a Zionist weekly, a great deal of type was devoted to that controversy, much more to the Jewish side than to the alleged anti-Semitism. I say "alleged" because except for a few anti-Semitic fusillades from a handful of quick roarers, the general black tenor of the Andrew Young aftermath was, as Dr. Kenneth Clark said, a "declaration of independence." (With some it did not last too long.) But it would be mindless to regard this declaration as anti-Semitism. Nor did Clark, for example, in any way intend it as such. There is more than enough authentic anti-Semitism around without using something like this as a reason for marching away from liberalism. Again, where to?

Then there are the indictments of liberals *(en masse,* presumably) for their "diminishing enthusiasm for Israel" as well as their "growing sympathy" for the PLO. Once more, I wonder at the evidence for the latter and note the quite misleading imprecision of language in the former formulation. There are liberals, I expect, who agree with a growing number of Israelis that, sooner or later, Israel will have to negotiate, or try to, with the PLO because peace is made with enemies. But I am not aware of any mass defection among liberals from the conviction that the PLO is a collection of murderers.

As for dwindling enthusiasm for Israel, there is a profound difference between support of the national homeland and a rising fear that so long as Begin, and others with like views, are in command, Israel is a great danger unto itself. The ardent Zionists, many of them combat veterans, who make up the growing numbers of Israel's Peace Now movement hold this belief. And there are now signs that, finally, an open debate will soon begin within a number of major American Jewish organizations as to Begin's settlements policy, his fake "autonomy" proposals to the Palestinians in the occupied territories, and other stands that have indeed led to diminishing enthusiasm for the Begin *government,* but not for Israel.

I wish the questions had had more intellectual substance; but perhaps, given the nature of this agenda, that wasn't possible. Once more, given our history and our intelligence, our commitment, as always, ought to be to make liberalism honest and to make it work.

NAT HENTOFF *is a staff writer for the* Village Voice *and the* New Yorker.

Arthur Hertzberg: From its beginnings two centuries ago in the era of the French revolution, liberalism has meant at least two things. It has contained a reformist majority and a doctrinaire left wing. In the 19th century, the heirs of Montesquieu and the Gironde became social democrats. Those who looked back to Robespierre and the Jacobins became revolutionary socialists.

Not every reformer in the last two centuries has liked Jews or wanted to help them increase their role in society, and many revolutionary socialists, such as Lenin, have fought against anti-Semites both of the Right and of the Left. Nonetheless, on balance, the revolutionary Left has had a marked and lasting tradition of imagining a new heaven on earth without Jews. The emancipation of the Jews, wherever it has occurred and has lasted, has been the work of centrist liberals.

A comparable analysis could be made of conservatism. Both English Tories and the Black Hundreds of Czarist Russia are termed conservatives, but there is a vast difference betwen ideologues who engage in repression and an aristocracy, such as the British, which sometimes "dished the Whigs" by moving over to accommodate new forces which might otherwise make revolution.

WE are not now hearing of comparable tensions within liberalism for the first time in America. The Communists and even Norman Thomas, the leader of American socialism, remained in the 1940's doctrinaire opponents of Zionism. The political and religious Left of today did not invent the rhetoric of anti-Zionism; it was to be found in the *Christian Century* of the 1930's and 1940's, against which Reinhold Niebuhr fought. The concreteness of Jews in their own right, which includes the commitment to Zionism and the economic profile of a group largely concentrated in managerial and professional roles, was attacked and reattacked a generation ago by people as diverse as Henry Ford and Father Coughlin; Jews are now attacked by both John Connally and Jesse Jackson.

Neither conservatism nor liberalism, if each is

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defined at its most extreme as a movement of either the revolution or the counterrevolution, is the political home for Jews. Jews have flourished best in Anglo-Saxon countries, in Britain and its former colonies, and, of course, in the United States, where an expanding capitalism, for which an untidy liberalism speaks, has made room for the rise of Jews into society.

What is most significant in America today is that, contrary to the phrase from Yeats that is so often quoted, the Center is holding. It is the task of Jews, for the peace of society and for their own sake, to help it hold. Jews—and fortunately not they alone—are working to find the middle ground. So most Jews are rightly for neither "affirmative action" nor the equally dangerous assertion that only "merit" must prevail. The most recent Supreme Court decisions have been muddled and not very satisfying. In that very muddle, there is more sense than in any clear-cut victories for one or the other side.

The unideological Center of American life remains committed to Israel, not as either a permanent forward bastion of the cold war or a permanent occupier of the West Bank. The mainstream of American opinion is no different from the Jewish consensus, both in Israel and the United States. Here, too, the ideologues of the Right and of the Left, Islamic Marxists, black nationalists, Gush Emunim, and so on, demand clarity based on their unvarying absolutes. There is no balm for Gilead in any of these doctrines, only in untidy accommodations.

IN AMERICAN politics Jews will no doubt remain largely in the Democratic party, but it is not unhelpful that there is a substantial representation now among the Republicans. In both camps, the weight of Jewish opinion and activity is in favor of the centrists.

There are, of course, Jews who find this discomforting. They prefer to dream dreams and see visions of a new world in the creation of which a Jewish political intelligentsia plays the priestly-prophetic role. Most Jews have, however, learned that Trotskys may serve the revolution of the Left brilliantly, but Jews are ultimately not safe within it. Comparably, the right-wing rulers of inter-war Poland did not protect their Jewish friends, even those who were, there in the 1920's and 1930's, the intellectuals of the Right.

America is today facing two fundamental problems: how to accommodate to a changed, and probably reduced, role for itself internationally and how to reorder its society to accommodate what is an increasing microcosm of the white-Western/Third World encounter.

For Jews to be on doctrinaire barricades on either side at this moment is to help increase the tensions and to run the danger of being swept away if the confrontations, especially the domestic ones, become sharper. America as a whole no longer controls events abroad. The Center must be made to hold at home.

ARTHUR HERTZBERG *is rabbi of Temple Emanu-El in Englewood, New Jersey and was president of the American Jewish Congress from 1972 to 1978. His most recent book is* Being Jewish in America.

Gertrude Himmelfarb: I suspect that a fair number of the contributors to this symposium will object to the terms in which the issue has been posed, especially to the assignment of the title of "liberalism" to the deplorable practices described here. They will point out that historically and philosophically liberalism has been associated with individuality. How then can liberals be thought to favor quotas, which make group identification (race, sex, ethnicity) rather than individual merit the criterion for appointment or promotion? Historically and philosophically liberalism has been committed to free, democratic, representative institutions. How then can liberals be less than friendly to the only state in the Middle East which has such institutions? Historically and philosophically liberalism has relied on orderly rational discourse to resolve political differences. How then can liberals be tolerant of a movement that has made violence and murder the normal mode of political behavior? Historically and philosophically anti-Semitism has been the epitome of everything odious to liberalism, everything illiberal, irrational, benighted, bigoted. How then can liberals be insensitive or unresponsive to any excrescence of this sort?

All of this is true, and yet irrelevant—"academic," as we say. For the fact is that liberalism today is not what it once was. Liberals today—people who identify themselves and are generally recognized by others as such—display attitudes and espouse policies which would once have been unthinkable. To be sure, they do so in a rhetoric that bears a specious resemblance to traditional liberalism. Thus they defend not quotas but "goals" designed to "compensate for historic inequities." They object not to the existence of Israel but to its "colonialism." They deplore the "excesses" of the PLO but recognize it as the legitimate voice of a dispossessed people seeking "self-determination" in its own "homeland." They do not condone the anti-Semitic "lapses" of some black leaders but they sympathize with the frustration and exasperation of a long-suffering, disadvantaged people giving vent to its natural feelings and passions.

If we are not taken in by the new rhetoric, we must also recognize that the reality behind it is not altogether new, that what we are facing is not

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a momentary aberration or anomaly. For a long time now liberals have been discarding one after another of their traditional principles, bits and pieces of their original agenda. Advocates of a free-market economy have long protested against the usurpation of the title "liberal" by those who have no historic right to it, who seek to enhance the role of the government in the economy and society, who are excessively partial to the public sector over the private, who seem to favor regulations and controls for one purpose or another—all in clear violation of the precepts of classical liberalism. One can sympathize with the beleaguered defenders of the true faith. But one must also recognize that they have lost the battle, that the title has gone, by right of conquest, to the new liberals, and that to deny them the title is to flout the reality.

WHAT, then, in the face of this reality, is one to make of the traditional relationship of Jews to liberalism? It is one thing to be wary of the new liberalism, even to dissociate oneself from it; quite another to announce one's adherence to the traditional alternative to liberalism—conservatism. If liberals have short memories, Jews have long ones. And our memories remind us that when we emerged into the modern world liberals were our natural allies. What possible connection could we have had with the values, interests, communities, and historic loyalties of conservatives? What did we have to gain from a traditional, hierarchical, "organic" society where all of us (all but the Rothschilds among us) were consigned to the "lower orders," where we were impoverished, constrained, disfranchised (this last condition applying even to the Rothchilds)? We needed liberalism to liberate, elevate, and emancipate us.

Perhaps because we needed it so desperately, we convinced ourselves that Judaism and liberalism were necessarily, inherently congruent, that they shared the same interests and principles. We tried not to think about all those aspects of Judaism which were patently not liberal, which were, in fact, conservative: the value accorded by Judaism to tradition, law, family, community, authority, religion itself. I am reminded of the student who came to me in great excitement after a seminar on Edmund Burke to tell me that she finally understood why she was an Orthodox Jew—understood, that is, the grounds for Orthodoxy *per se*, for a "particularist" rather than a universal creed, for a religious community embodying that creed, and for laws and traditions which sustain it.

Most of us have had to learn that lesson in more painful ways. Some of us have been forced to rethink our relationship to liberalism by petty bureaucrats in HEW, by terrorists abroad and their defenders (or non-objectors) at home, by politicians, journalists, and actresses turned activists, who, in their ardor for newly fashionable liberal causes, have been all too willing to sacrifice the interests and principles of Jews. And some of us will never learn that lesson. We shall continue to think that because liberalism was once well disposed to us, we have a permanent commitment to it, owe it a debt that can never be repaid, are tied to it by a bond of fealty that can never be discharged. We shall continue to overlook the "deviations" and "aberrations" of our supposed friends—just as socialists have ignored, for a century and a half, the anti-Semitism of one after another socialist leader, theorist, and movement. And, worse, we shall continue to be apologetic about those parts of Judaism which do not (which never did) fit comfortably into the liberal mold. We shall reinterpret and revise our beliefs and practices to accommodate them to the universalistic, naturalistic, rationalistic, secularist disposition of liberalism—and this at a time when universalism, naturalism, rationalism, and secularism have so little credibility that they are succumbing to every variety of syncretistic sect and cult.

BUT reality has a way of catching up with us. If latter-day liberals have exposed their tenuous commitment to individualism and democracy, if affirmative action has shown itself to be yet another form of negative discrimination, if the historic sympathy with Jews as the underdogs of society has evidently given way to new causes and new victims, we may begin to question our own commitment to liberalism. We may begin to suspect that the liberalism that brought us into modernity, that gave us our freedom as individuals and tolerated us as Jews, has been replaced by a new liberalism that is inhospitable to us both as individuals and as Jews. We may conclude that a quite different philosophy is required if we are to survive in the modern world, survive as individuals and as Jews.

That philosophy is not conservatism as traditionally understood. Traditional conservatism still displays some of the characteristics that made it unpalatable to us in the past. It tends to be socially exclusive, intellectually philistine, identified with classes and institutions which are alien to us. It is weighed down with too much of its own history, a history that made it *Judenfrei* in Burke's time (and for a century or more since), and that continues to make Jews feel unwanted even today. If this is so, if the traditional alternatives are no longer satisfactory, we must look for a new philosophical synthesis and a new political disposition.

Those of us who have come to this point have also found ourselves liberated from our old party affiliations, from a nostalgic commitment to social democracy which in practice meant a commitment to the Democratic party. This is not to say that we have become Republicans. For most of us the Republican party, like traditional conservatism, represents attitudes and classes which are uncongenial. We are, for the moment, homeless—"independent," to put the best face on it. This is not

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altogether a liability. To the extent to which we now feel free to associate ourselves with one or another candidate in either party (or, more often, to dissociate ourselves from one or another candidate), we may have more influence in the choice of those candidates—in both parties. At a time when parties count for less and candidates for more, this strategy makes a good deal of sense. The fact that parties do count for less is unfortunate. But this itself is, in good part, a consequence of the new liberalism, of a misplaced zeal for reform which reveals as little understanding of the principles of the Constitution as of any established institution.

As we learn to take advantage of our new-found political independence, we may be inspired to think more boldly about our real interests and principles—not only about those immediate and obvious ones which are the subject of this symposium (quotas, Israel, anti-Semitism), but also those which have a less direct but no less vital bearing upon us: a strong military establishment and a vigorous foreign policy without which the defense of Israel is empty rhetoric, and economic policies conducive to economic growth without which the future of Jews, like that of any other minority, is gravely imperiled. And beyond these are our more enduring interests and principles, which we have given too little thought to during our long association with liberalism—the need for social attitudes and policies which will be favorable to (rather than, as is more often the case today, subversive of) family, community, tradition, morality, religion. It is unlikely that the political parties will tidily define themselves in terms of these issues. But at least we shall have learned to define ourselves.

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Milton Himmelfarb: The political scientist William Schneider's summary of the facts rules out interest ("life situation") as an explanation of Jewish liberalism:

> Jewish voters are typically *more* liberal and *more* Democratic than any other (white) ethnocultural groups . . . even more distinctively Democratic than blacks. Blacks vote "with" their life situation: they vote Democratic because they are poor and they vote more Democratic because they are black. Jews vote "against" their life situation.

When the "Statement Unanimously Adopted by [the] Black Leadership Meeting" last August dismissed the Jews' liberalism as rooted in "their perceived interest," the black leaders had their reason for saying what they said. We have no reason to add to the obfuscation. How was it more in the interest of Jews than of Italians, Poles, Seventh Day Adventists, or Mormons to support desegregation of the schools or to send a check to the NAACP?

The black leaders' assertion of a Jewish interest is like that easy refutation of altruism: "Superficial people call an act altruistic when it seems not to be in the interest of the actor, as when he gives money or undergoes hardship for the benefit of others. Nonsense. The seemingly altruistic act makes the actor feel good. That is his reward, and where there is reward there is no altruism." It is by definition, therefore, or rather by tautology, that Jewish liberalism springs from Jewish interest. The black leaders stated without apology that blacks act in their own interest. That is the American way. An odd consequence is that of all American Jews the Hasidim of Brooklyn are the most American in their politics.

In a 1978 Harris poll for the National Conference of Christians and Jews, 39 per cent of "national black leaders" thought "Jewish groups" really wanted to promote "black equality"—more than thought the Catholic Church did (37 per cent) or white Protestant churches (6 per cent). Ordinary black respondents gave Catholics 25 per cent, Jews 18 per cent, and white Protestants 12 per cent. Now comes the shocker. Asked whether, "when it comes to choosing between people and money, Jews will choose money," 56 per cent of ordinary black respondents agreed—8 per cent more than in 1974. That is bad enough, but not so bad as the response of black leaders. Of these, the very people who thought Jews better disposed than other whites to black equality, 81 per cent said that Jews will choose money over people: four out of five. Asked whether "most of the slumlords are Jewish"—not some, or even many, but most—37 per cent of ordinary black respondents said yes in 1974, and 41 per cent in 1978. In 1978, 67 per cent of black leaders said that most of the slumlords are Jewish: two out of three. With such friends, who needs enemies?

A realist knows that if you don't want someone to dislike you, you don't do him favors. (Give one man a job, according to the politicians, and you make ten enemies and an ingrate.) A realist would say that if we had acted from interest and not done favors for black leaders they might now dislike us less or, better still, have us on their minds less. Hispanics—Puerto Ricans, Mexicans, and so on—are taking over from blacks as the biggest and most clamant minority. If we learn from our experience with black leaders, we will not do favors for Hispanic leaders. But we will not learn. First we will do them favors and then they will say we did the favors only because it was in our

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interest to do them. And what have we done for them lately? Besides, everyone knows that most of the slumlords are Jewish.

We will not learn because we do not want to learn.

IF OUR rote liberalism has been against our interest, it does not follow that rote conservatism would be in our interest. It is in our interest to feel free to vote for one party or the other, and especially to be seen to be free. It is further in our interest that we should be enrolled in each party in such numbers as to discourage stands damaging to us. What is Connally's strategy? First things first—before he can be elected he has to be nominated. He does not expect his anti-Israel position to hurt him in the primaries. On the contrary, he expects it to help him, if only by setting him off from the other candidates and making him seem bolder and more forthright. So he offends Jews. What does that cost him? Everybody is a little annoyed with us, and there are not enough of us voting in Republican primaries for him to worry about. He can cozy up to us later. But even then, how much thought will a Republican nominee give to the Jews? Goldwater said a nominee hunts ducks where the ducks are, and Republican ducks are not Jews.

Before the 1972 election there was hardly an issue of a news magazine without its revelation about the new Jewish conservatism. Though the Democrats were then, as now, the majority party, and though the Republican nominee was unattractive, about 69 per cent of white Christian voters voted against the Democrat. Of Jewish voters, about 65 per cent voted *for* him. That is what Jewish conservatism means: giving a two-thirds vote to the most unpopular Democratic candidate in memory. Compulsive smokers know that smoking is not good for them but they keep smoking. Most Jews are compulsive Democratic voters. As a friend of mine puts it, "I'm an independent, I always vote Democratic." A sensible Republican is unlikely to put great effort into hunting such elusive prey. A sensible Democratic candidate is unlikely to put great effort into winning over people who have shown that they will vote for him regardless.

What partially saves us, in spite of ourselves, is the importance of a swing. Since one Democrat who votes Republican is worth two votes to the Republicans, the one that they got and the one that the Democrats lost, it does make a little sense for Republicans not to give up on the Jews completely and for the Democrats not to take us for granted completely.

Mayer Amschel Rothschild had one son in Germany, one in Austria, one in Italy, one in France, and one in England. No matter who won in a warring Europe, the Rothschilds would not lose. But then, in those days the religion of most Jews had not yet been superseded by Progress, a.k.a. Liberalism.

MILTON HIMMELFARB, *a contributing editor of* COMMENTARY, *is the editor of the* American Jewish Year Book *and the author of* The Jews of Modernity.

Sidney Hook: It would be a profound error for Jews to forswear their allegiance to the social and political philosophy of liberalism because some erstwhile liberals have betrayed its fundamental principles. Those of us who have condemned the quota system and especially the outrageous decisions of the Supreme Court in the *Weber* and *Bakke* cases have done so because they violate what until now has been regarded as axiomatic to a liberal philosophy and not because of the adverse consequences of quotas for Jews or any other group. We would just as vehemently oppose a quota system that favored Jews.

There are few propositions that are demonstrable about human affairs. The nearest to one is the view that those who desire to preserve their individual or group identity as Jews are more likely to do so without suffering official persecution in a community governed by liberal principles than in any other. This is not the only or even the chief reason for adhering to the liberal faith. The grounds on which one holds a liberal philosophy, if valid, justify commitment to it not only by Jews but by reasonable men and women regardless of their color, sex, creed, or national origin.

The issues involved in this discussion are old, perhaps one should say perennial. It probably testifies to my limitations, but I cannot see in what way the position I advanced in an article in the *Menorah Journal* in the fall of 1937, "Promise Without Dogma: A Social Philosophy for Jews," has been rendered anachronistic by events since then—except possibly in one respect. I argued at the time that the conditions a social philosophy must fulfill "to be acceptable to Jews who wish to survive, of course, not exclusively as Jews, but as Jews nonetheless are (1) a recognition of the value of cultural diversity; (2) tolerance of religious differences; (3) a fighting faith in democracy as a way of political and social life; (4) acceptance of an ideal of economic reorganization which, for want of a better name, I would call democratic socialism; and (5) reliance upon the methods of critical inquiry in approaching all problems." The one respect that requires modification was expressed by Alvin Johnson in his eloquent and vigorous response to my article in the subsequent issue. Agreeing with most of what I wrote. he took issue with my fourth criterion: "I will go farther and assert that there is no hope for the Jew as Jew in socialism, if by socialism we

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mean an economy organized as a single unit, centrally controlled and managed. No matter how liberal might be the constitution of a state that set itself up as an exclusive employer, that controlled all the avenues to a living, the exigencies of technological operation would force it along the path of totalitarianism."

Actually at that time, like most socialists, we envisaged something far short of a completely collectivized economy. The customary reference was to "the commanding heights" of the economy. Later, following the lead of Norman Thomas and John Dewey, we set our political sights on the development of a genuine welfare state with a mixed economy. But we were remiss in not grasping sooner and more vividly the totalitarian potential of the Soviet model of economy not only for Jews but for all human beings enmeshed in its operation. Events have made Alvin Johnson's warning more prescient.

SIDNEY HOOK, *professor emeritus of philosophy at New York University, is currently a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution, Stanford University. His books include* The Hero in History, From Hegel to Marx, *and the forthcoming* Philosophy and Public Policy.

Irving Howe: Let's glance at the reasons COMMENTARY gives for calling into question the "axiom" of Jewish support for liberalism:

"Widespread support among liberals for quotas." In some instances, no doubt. But more widespread, I'd say, is liberal support for affirmative action, something to be seen as decidedly different from quotas. This distinction is habitually denied or minimized in COMMENTARY; but many distinctions are habitually denied or minimized in COMMENTARY. I can hardly suppose that supporting affirmative action makes one an opponent of Jewish needs, otherwise it would be necessary to condemn a good many Jewish organizations that can not be described as radical.

"Diminishing enthusiasm among liberals for Israel." No evidence being offered, it's hard to know what COMMENTARY has in mind. The one major instance of such "diminishing enthusiasm" in American political life has come from John Connally, representative of Texas oil and corporate America. What can, however, be said is that many liberals—and American Jews as well—are greatly disturbed by the Begin government's evident intention to maintain its domination over the West Bank and the Arabs who live there, an intention that violates the democratic ethos (and threatens the Jewish character) of Israel. To criticize these Begin policies from an appropriately pro-Israel commitment seems to me not a sign of diminishing enthusiasm for but an act of urgent defense of Israel.

"Growing sympathy of liberals for the PLO." Possibly so, among some. But mostly what I see, out there in the real world, is a recognition—often reluctant and unhappy—that a Palestinian national sentiment is now a historical reality not to be dismissed by looking the other way and that a final peace in the Middle East will have to cope with this reality. Not just the unnamed liberals COMMENTARY invokes but an increasing number of Israelis and even some American Jews are being driven to this recognition, and it has nothing whatever, certainly nothing necessarily, to do with "sympathy" for the PLO, either its ideology or methods.

Now, none of this is to deny that the liberalism of at least some American Jews has become less assured, more troubled and qualified. Of course; but it hardly distinguishes them from other Americans. As we now enter a new stage, or resist entering a new stage, of the welfare state, liberalism is experiencing a severe intellectual-political crisis. This crisis is partly a result of its own (limited) successes—the achievements of the welfare state in which we live. It is partly a result, also, of its own failures—the difficulties of coping with unforeseen or underestimated problems of the welfare state. And it is partly a result of the inner hesitations of American liberalism to recognize that the first initiating phase of the welfare state having now been more or less completed, it's necessary to move toward a modestly radical or social-democratic policy that would signify a stronger egalitarian commitment and a sharper threat to corporate hegemony. Liberalism today is roughly in a stage similar to that in which it found itself during the decade before the New Deal: regathering intellectual energies, working out new programs, fending off attacks from enemies and fading friends. I believe that with an increment of social-democratic policies in the economic sphere liberalism will again be resurgent at some point in the 1980's and that many American Jews will contribute significantly to this event.

BUT surely there are also special "internal" reasons for the weakening of liberal attachment among American Jews and here I can note only a few:

It may be—proof would be hard to come by—that the improved socioeconomic position of some American Jews is gradually having its political impact. Jewish commentators have often stressed, with pride and/or regret, that when American Jews move up the socioeconomic ladder they do not, like other groups, become more conservative but retain their liberal attachments. Just possibly—this is my impression from traveling about the country—the slow process of "normalizing" our socioeconomic position has begun to produce some unattractive "normal" consequences.

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The pressures of the Begin government even in its brief tenure have led to a notable turn toward chauvinist sloganeering among portions of the American Jewish community and an increase of uncritical responsiveness to whatever signals come from Israeli spokesmen. To be fair, this had already begun under the Labor regime, e.g., Rabin's not very subtle nods toward Nixon.

An odd paradox characterizes American Jewish institutional life, namely, that such leading journals as COMMENTARY and *Midstream* appear to be somewhat, perhaps a good deal, more conservative than their sponsors. Many American Jews probably don't know that major Jewish organizations, including the American Jewish Committee, while opposed to quotas, have come out for affirmative action, and they may suppose that the campaign of COMMENTARY to meld quotas and affirmative action represents a unified Jewish opinion. Those of us who disagree sharply with COMMENTARY's line must be realistic enough to admit that it has had an impact upon the thinking of Jewish institutional spokesmen, perhaps by hardening impulses already there.

A WITHDRAWAL of Jewish commitment to liberalism would be a disaster for the country and also, I think, for the Jews. A large segment of American Jews—the professional and semi-professional classes—is deeply enmeshed in the workings of the welfare state and has an economic and intellectual stake in its flourishing. More important, even if one wished (or thought it possible) to withdraw to a parochial "interest-group" view of Jewish life, it could still be strongly argued that staying with the universalist vision—a belief in a liberal society of steadily-accumulating social reforms—remains the best way of defending strictly Jewish interests and an important way of sustaining the inner morale of the Jewish community. But most important, social liberalism has been defined as the "secular religion" of many American Jews, the precious salvage from their immigrant and East European heritage, the embodied value of a major segment of Jewish experience. That in the long run even this liberal commitment might not suffice, at least by itself, to maintain a vital Jewish presence in America could be cogently argued from an Orthodox or Conservative religious position. But that is not the standpoint from which COMMENTARY asks or answers its questions. If we tacitly agree, then, to remain largely within the secular realm, I think it all but self-evident that liberalism still offers the best (though not an unmarred) framework for the effort to realize humane values —freedom, egalitarianism, fraternity—in the society at large and to assert the validity of specifically Jewish claims. The case for Israel, to cite one crucial example, is far more strongly made in terms of its democratic character and historic ties with Holocaust survivors than in the shaky categories of American "national interest."

I am not saying here that liberalism is "inherent" in Judaism or that the Prophets were canny enough to anticipate my politics. But as a democratic socialist who cares about Jewish values, I continue to believe that liberalism is our natural home, insofar as we can ever be at home. That is why I oppose the extremist conservatism that has recently flourished in the pages of COMMENTARY and that is why—it's not a matter of personalities or literary feuds—we may expect a hard political-intellectual battle within the Jewish arena during the next decade. Meanwhile I thank the editors of COMMENTARY for granting me this space to express my opposition to their views.

IRVING HOWE, *the editor of* Dissent, *is the author of* The World of Our Fathers, The Decline of the New, *and* Politics and the Novel, *among other books.*

Erich Isaac: In lending their support to those who pursue the liberal agenda, which is the current term for the radical agenda of the 1960's, and has become, alas, the national agenda, Jews have been pursuing an anti-Jewish agenda.

The Jewish consensus on Israel is stronger than on any other issue. Jews wish to see Israel survive and thrive. Despite this, Jews—and not simply Jewish intellectuals—have given political support to policies that can only lead to Israel's abandonment.

Jewish Congressmen, most of them elected by districts with sizable Jewish populations, pursue a "liberal" foreign policy. That policy was defined by John Kenneth Galbraith in a 1966 COMMENTARY article, "An Agenda for American Liberals," as one that "identifies us with the hopes and aspirations of the people." According to Galbraith: "A conservative policy identifies us with privileged groups and with governments that are the servants and protectors of privilege and we pay the penalty for such association when the day of the people arrives." This new liberal foreign-policy agenda precluded the use of power to maintain friendly regimes since, by definition, when those regimes came under internal attack, they were being attacked by "the people." Presumably such notions explain the results of a September 9 tally of votes of metropolitan area Congressmen by the New York *Times* on a measure that would have hindered administration efforts to pump money into the Sandinista regime in Nicaragua. All Jewish Congressmen voted on behalf of the Sandinistas. Yet the Sandinistas have worked hand in glove with the PLO and are converting Nicaragua into a Cuban-style Soviet affiliate.

Jewish Congressmen, and by extension those

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Jews who vote for them, apparently see no connection between Israel's safety and the exercise of American global power in support of countries dependent on it. Congressman Stephen Solarz of the congressional committee on Africa wants to deny additional arms to Morocco, a country which for two years has been the target of a campaign by the Algerian-backed Polisario guerrillas that has received worldwide support mobilized by the Soviet agit-prop apparatus. Yet the consequences of an Algerian-Polisario victory in the Western Sahara would be to give Algeria and its Soviet allies a base on the African flank of Europe's major sea routes. It would leave Morocco with no land frontiers except with Algeria, making a successful invasion or the supply of internal insurrection in Morocco much more likely. It would also mean that the supply of American forces in the Mediterranean and, if need be, of Israel, would become much more difficult. In southern Africa, by working to deny legitimacy to the Muzorewa regime in Zimbabwe Rhodesia, Congressman Solarz has in effect supported the Nkomo-Mugabe factions.

Ideology does not wholly account for this behavior. For even from the standpoint of a Galbraithian liberal ideology, Morocco is freer and more tolerant of social diversity than the Algerian left-wing military dictatorship. Muzorewa's regime was established in elections which were the freest and most comprehensive that have taken place in Africa. Fear fuels the double standard now that liberal policies have drastically weakened the United States. Instead of a free-market struggle for the minds of men—this was to be the only place a free market operated in the fantasies of statist liberals—there are Cuban mercenaries and Soviet arms. The alternatives faced by liberals who are involved in shaping foreign policy are whether to succumb to the demands backed by the Soviet Union before the Cubans move in or afterward.

Liberal foreign policy in the Third World has become one of anticipating Soviet demands and meeting them before the Soviet Union could intervene to humiliate the U.S. by showing up our inability to react effectively. In the Middle East, the whole thrust of the Carter administration, until it was partially—and only temporarily—derailed by Sadat's seizing the initiative, was to satisfy the demands of the Soviet-backed PLO before the Soviet Union could embarrass the U.S. by supporting its Arab clients in another war in which our unwillingness, and probably inability, to back Israel were revealed.

IT IS past time that Jews engaged themselves in the effort to define a Jewish agenda. Unfortunately, those most deeply immersed in Jewish law and philosophy have not concerned themselves with this matter. Yet it should not be too difficult to identify in that tradition philosophical underpinnings for this agenda, e.g., "Thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty: but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbor." A good principle for Jews to represent should a new constitutional convention be convened.

The goals of the agenda must include the strengthening of that social, political, and economic system which has given greater freedom to Jews in their dispersion, both as Jews and as men, than any other since the extinction of ancient Jewish statehood, i.e., modern capitalism. The agenda must include the cherishing and defense of social structures which allow for the broadening and flourishing of the so-called middle class, that class which in modern times has been culturally the most productive and creative. It must include the fostering of scientific, technological, and economic growth against insidious ideologies that presume to find in such growth the roots of inhumanity (except when it is pursued by the enemies of freedom).

Understandings that must be made explicit in the formulation of the agenda are that the United States today is the last defense of the West, and that Israel is an outpost whose survival or extinction foreshadows the fate of the U.S.; that political and military power and the skill and will to use it when necessary must be fostered; that power in the hands of societies that cherish the values of the agenda does not corrupt, but it is, rather, powerlessness that corrupts. The corruption of powerlessness is nowhere better revealed than in the double moral standard that pervades American foreign policy at this moment.

Finally, the American Jew should make clear in his new agenda that he will work with all those for whom the success of American freedom is dear and with all those for whom the story of Israel and its political renaissance has meaning. What he will not do is enter alliances in which the targets of others impose on him compliance with purposes that are not in his interest, often indeed in direct conflict with the Jewish agenda here outlined.

I have no illusions about the difficulties involved. There are deep-seated emotional and intellectual forces and institutional rigidities in the Jewish community that would impede the establishment of new priorities. The community is an aging one, and much of the youth, in common with college-educated youth in general, has already committed itself to targets that are the reverse of those proposed here. Moreover, the alliances that would be necessary involve uncharted territory beset with traps. Nonetheless, the effort must be made, for the destructiveness of present policies and the failure of old and oversold alliances prohibit further lingering with them.

ERICH ISAAC *is professor of geography at the City College of New York.*

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Rael Jean Isaac: For some years now those who have appropriated the term liberal have pursued an agenda that draws upon assumptions the obverse of the body of ideas that were first called liberal. The emphasis on individual freedom characteristic of 19th-century liberals has been replaced by the goal of equality, which can only be pursued at the expense of freedom. Nineteenth-century liberals were imbued with an idea of progress that would be achieved through the abolition of traditional fetters upon the pursuit of excellence. But while all were to be equally free of institutional constraints, there was no misperception that all would achieve equally, or that all that was achieved would be of equal social and cultural value, or that there existed a moral obligation to foster equally every human effort. Bluntly, liberals were elitists.

Their elitism benefited Jews. With the ascent of the new ideas, liberals, at least in the Western democracies, began to man some of the institutional barriers that closed Jews out of various areas of social life. Jews were able to challenge these barriers in the name of the very values of those who imposed them.

Given the various ways Jews benefited from liberal ideology, it would seem surprising that there has been no greater resistance by Jews to the current inversion or "theft of liberalism," to use the title of Robert Loewenberg's thoughtful essay (*Midstream*, May 1977). The explanation perhaps lies in specifically Jewish cultural and religious traditions which have made Jews keenly aware of the darker sides of liberalism, whose value system implied there would be losers as well as gainers. Furthermore, in the autocratic countries where the masses of Jews lived, liberalism appeared as the property of an upper-class intelligentsia to which Jews did not belong and whose salon conversations appeared uncaring and irrelevant to the imperatives of Jewish survival. As a value system, socialist utopianism was far more congenial. Socialism seemed a restatement of traditional Jewish social concern in a universal language. Promising that which liberalism promised without its costs, socialism became endowed with the immense power of Jewish utopian yearning. Absolute freedom and absolute equality were seen to be within reach; they would coexist without contradiction when the perfect society, if not the Lord God, "would wipe away tears from off all faces."

While socialist thought continued to be dominant in the shaping of Jewish institutions in Palestine, in the United States, at least since World War II, socialism as an explicit political creed ceased to attract any but a segment of Jewish intellectuals. Socialism was tarnished by the creation, in the countries where Jewish faith in its promise had been strongest, of an equality in which there was no place for Jews. But when in the United States there was a transformation of liberalism into a strategy for the solution of societal problems through government intervention there was, at least initially, almost universal Jewish enthusiasm. To many Jews it seemed that the New Jerusalem would be fulfilled in the United States. The country was seen as a community of the perfectible, and judges and social-science experts were endowed with the authority of a secular priesthood.

When societal problems proved recalcitrant to the instant fixes of the secular priesthood and liberals moved to implement measures whose inimical consequences for Jews were obvious, Jews were taken aback. The establishment of a statutory caste system, the elevation of racial characteristics as a key to an engineered social mobility, met a confused and indecisive Jewish reaction. The excuse for the new system was, of course, that there had been an application of racial standards in the past to exclude mobility. Jews found themselves unable to assert with any confidence that the solution to the evil was not to reimpose such standards and give them administrative and judicial sanction where legislative sanction was lacking.

To compound their confusion and anxiety, Jews found that the attitude of liberals toward Israel was becomingly increasingly critical. The liberal passion for explaining undesirable behaviors by their social setting and finding a solution by changing the setting was extended to international affairs. In truth, there is no liberal foreign policy. Instead there is a penchant for identifying the deserving, defined as those who seek a redistribution of wealth and power. Terrorism, as practiced for example by the PLO, is explained as the product of legitimate unsatisfied aspirations. Israel, on the other hand, has become the victim of egalitarian enthusiasm. Once praised by liberals for such unique institutions as the Histadrut and the (ironically, egalitarian) kibbutz, or for such unique enterprises as the ingathering of Jews from all corners of the world, Israel now fails to be a state like all others. Ingathering of exiles becomes racism because all who seek citizenship are not treated equally. Moreover, since all Third World countries or groups with whom the liberals identify internationally condemn Israel, it would be difficult to break ranks.

THE ideological attraction of egalitarian liberalism has been so great that when Jews have not simply acted against their interests, their efforts at self-defense have been retarded and enfeebled. Some Jews still stand in the forefront of present liberalism. They do not even hesitate to join the onslaught on Israel. Although the Jewish organization Breira had a radical core, for the most part

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those who identified with its program of creating a state for the PLO saw themselves as liberals. But even such a mainstream organization as the American Jewish Congress resisted condemning so-called affirmative action and only after much time and internal strain sought to stem the tide for a quota system (with much less effectiveness than it might have had, had it acted earlier). Certainly only a small minority of Jewish intellectuals have dared to brave the epithet "conservative" or "neoconservative" by attacking the entire complex of liberal values as currently defined, showing how devastating these values are not only to Jewish existence in America but to the American polity.

Ideological affinities and images of the ideal have moved Jews more than a rational consideration of their political situation, and as Moshe Sharon has pointed out in the Jerusalem *Post* (October 21, 1979), this has also been true of Israeli political leaders. While Jews have grown uneasy over some manifestations of liberal policy, there is no sign of an understanding among most Jews of their relationship to the underlying assumptions and orientations of liberals. Jewish Congressmen, most of them elected by districts with sizable Jewish populations, vote more closely in accord with the black caucus and for measures to help the poor than any other group.

And, of course, there is the problem that the most recent, supposedly "conservative," Republican administrations have themselves pursued liberal policies while giving lip-service to conservatism. The positions taken by a presumably conservative candidate like John Connally are not likely to encourage Jews. But the problem of the state of conservative policy in the United States cannot be dealt with here. Perhaps "Jews and the Conservatives" should be the subject of another COMMENTARY symposium.

RAEL JEAN ISAAC *is a political sociologist and the author of* Israel Divided.

Neal Kozodoy: All over the the world the ideas, principles, and words in which modern Jews have most decisively placed their trust are being turned triumphantly against them.

The Jews founded their entry into modern society as individuals, and into the society of nations as a people, on the ideology of liberal democracy. Their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor they pledged to the principles of human and civil rights; of national self-determination; of justice, equality, and liberty; of freedom of expression and of religion. Today Jews stand accused everywhere of violating and subverting these same ideas, as well as of denying their benefits to others who represent them better and whose path to their enjoyment has been obstructed by Jewish "power." In the Middle East these others are said to be the Palestinian Arabs; in the United States they are said to be blacks and certain other non-Jewish minority groups; in the Soviet Union and from the rostrums of the Third World they are said to include all the disenfranchised of the earth.

The source of these despicably false accusations is, in the first instance, governments and individuals who stand, sometimes quite explicitly, for the opposite values—totalitarians and demagogues, thugs and bullies. But where, to the bewilderment and dismay of Jews, their accusers have found support, encouragement, and moral aid in this country is at the very core of the liberal culture: in the advanced churches and universities, on the editorial pages of the nation's leading newspapers, in centers and media of enlightened opinion, and in the hearts, minds, and quailing spirits of many individual liberals, including many liberal Jews.

It is because, but only partly because, Jews have for so long made their home in the shelter of liberal ideas that they are so vulnerable to attacks launched against them in the name of those ideas. They may say in their own defense that in turning the language of liberal democracy to anti-democratic uses the enemies of democracy have simply made a mockery of everything that language once signified; and besides, the charges are not true. But this reply, although it may satisfy the requirements of intellectual rectitude, does not satisfy the requirements of politics, for it does not address the *fact*, which is undeniable, of Jewish vulnerability in a world grown increasingly thuggish—a vulnerability which, to the degree that the Jews themselves must answer for it, ironically arises not from the Jewish embrace of liberal democracy but rather from the Jewish failure to embrace it.

As A social doctrine liberalism has nothing further to teach the Jews, and the Jews have nothing further to contribute to it. For the essence of the liberal social doctrine, which amounts to charity rationalized, is coincident in every important respect with the oldest and deepest principles of Jewish communal life. So instinctive and reflexive, by now, is the Jewish identification with this ideal of social obligation, so ingrained in habits of action and attitudes of mind, so in tune with long-sanctioned impulses and religious precept, that most Jews today would be hard-pressed even to conceive of any other model of civic virtue (there are a few!) than the model bodied forth by the catechism of liberal reform, any other definition of the good society than that epitomized by the commandment to do justice to the poor.

What needs to be addressed is not the Jewish relation to liberalism as a doctrine of social amelioration, but the Jewish relation to liberalism as a

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political ideology of which the first great animating principle is the principle of freedom. For the blunt and crippling truth is that the Jews of this country, especially those Jews who speak for the interests of their fellow Jews and who are the appointed keepers of the Jewish conscience, have not yet fully developed the habits and the attitudes appropriate to free men.

As the aftermath of the Andrew Young affair made clear, some Jews seem particularly adept at dodging what a more self-respecting political culture would define as their duty, and what a liberal order guarantees as their right: the duty and the right to stand up and defend oneself when attacked. At a time when American Jews as a group were being subjected to a shameless effort of delegitimation, and when even their right to look to their own, peaceable interests was being insolently proposed as a matter for open debate, the keepers of the Jewish conscience responded to the abuse directed at their community and its record with talismanic invocations of their credentials as the fellow victims of historic persecution; with assurances of their own continued benignity despite the "misguided" allegations of their accusers; and with impassioned reiterations of the Jewish commitment to defend the rights of *others*. That the accommodating message was duly received and duly registered may be easily inferred from the fact that no black leader, either during the carnival of vilification or since, has felt called upon to offer an apology for the public lies that were told, in the name of American blacks, about American Jews—and none has been demanded. The lies still stand, unrefuted and unretracted. As for the organizations charged with protecting the American Jewish interest, most have been quick to declare mended a fence which Jews had no hand in breaking down.

Obviously a conception is at work here, a demeaning conception, of the place Jews can claim for themselves within the American political order. It does not mitigate this situation, but on the contrary aggravates it tremendously, that some Jewish spokesmen have made a fetish out of their incapacity to grasp the political promise of a free society, wearing it as a badge of moral superiority. Thus, one self-styled representative of "today's Jews," writing soon after the Andrew Young affair, characterized the Jewish position in these words: "Our destiny. We live between the rock of the powerful and the hard place of the powerless, and survive by learning how to slither."

The sanctimonious, not to say smug, tone of this characterization may borrow something from the rhetoric of American Protestantism, but the sentiment—supercilious, ingratiatingly fearful, eager for the ratifying kick in the teeth—is the authentic expression of unfree Jewry. It is, in fact, precisely in the light of debased sentiments like these, insulting as they are to Jewish honor, and desperately out of place in a liberal democracy, that the entire question of a prospective Jewish detachment from liberalism comes to seem both conclusory and somehow premature. Are the Jews now to cast off a habit they have yet fully to acquire, spurn a gift yet to be assessed by them at its true value?

Two hundred years after the Bill of Rights, one hundred years after the inception of their own glorious movement of political and spiritual regeneration, thirty years after the realization of their national dreams, the keepers of the Jewish conscience still find it more in their nature to slither than to stand. One can "understand" this disposition in a hundred forgiving ways; one can even acknowledge its appeal, the exemption it offers from the dilemmas of political action. But it is a debility which, so long as it remains in place, will continue to render the Jews peculiarly open and vulnerable to the depredations of their enemies, and in times of crisis an intolerable burden to their friends. A disposition fatal to Jewish pride has become a menace to Jewish survival.

NEAL KOZODOY *is the executive editor of* COMMENTARY.

Max Lerner: When I grew up in New Haven, in the 1910's and 1920's, you could be a Jew and a Republican but the Woodrow Wilson influence remained strong. When I got out of graduate school and worked in New York as an editor in the 1930's, you were either a liberal or you were no one. In 1938 (*It Is Later Than You Think*) I started with a "Lament for the Liberal" because I felt that traditional liberalism fell short of the kind of "democratic collectivism" which alone could deal with an unraveling economy and with the Nazi threat. I was discontented with both Marxism and liberalism, and sketched out a strategy and tactic of a "militant democracy," which would combine the valid elements of both.

I start with this touch of a memoir because all of us, in our attitudes toward liberalism and other angles of vision, dip back into our life experience, as we also dip back into the experience of the liberal centuries.

There have been three broad phases in the history of liberal thought and action, and we are struggling now with the third. In the first, from the 17th through the 19th centuries, liberalism was the philosophy of the new middle and business classes in Europe and America, and stressed freedom, enlightenment, science, progress, and laissez-faire. With its upbeat quality of hope and promise, it had an irresistible attraction for the Jews who fled the blockages of European society to embrace the freedom and opportunity of America.

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The second phase came with the Communist and fascist revolutions in Europe and the Great Depression in the U.S. To the Jewish mind, with its focus on Hitler and the death camps as the prime symbols of moral as well as political-economic breakdown, liberalism took on a new dimension of emotional depth. If Hitler was the adversary, Franklin Roosevelt, New Deal shaper and war leader, became the positive symbol, and his policy of big-government interventionism—both domestic and foreign—a kind of natural law for Jews and other liberals. Harry Truman's cordial recognition of Israel as refuge and homeland rounded out the Jewish commitment.

The third and current phase began with the New Left of the 1960's and was strengthened by the recoil from the Vietnam war, Watergate, and the CIA revelations. Unlike the liberalism of the first two phases, it has no organic, overarching philosophy, only a cluster of particularist for-and-against attitudes—against technology and economic growth, against nuclear energy, against a higher weapons budget, for reduction of American forces abroad, against a foreign policy that might mean intervention (especially in the Middle East), for a new brand of isolationism, for all Third World guerrilla movements (including sympathy for the PLO), against moderate and multiracial African governments, against Israel's effort to maintain secure boundaries, against authoritarian right-wing governments allied with America, against U.S. intelligence agencies, for welfare statism, for quota systems to make up for historic ethnic and gender discriminations, for an absolutist approach to criminal-law freedoms and to media freedoms, against monetary inflation controls, for price-and-wage controls.

There are three things remarkable about this melange of attitudes. It does not face the problems of power and survival in a dangerous world or time, including the need for arms and effective intelligence services. It sets a double standard for left-wing and right-wing revolutionary movements and governments, and for American cooperation with them. Finally, in its culture-hatred and self-hatred it has cut itself off from the deep impulses of the American culture—toward social order and public tranquility, toward setting limits on destructive change, toward a broad consensus that will resist the fragmentizing of society, toward attachment to country, toward a cohesive value system and a recognition of the need for the sacral in every culture.

If the first historic phase of liberalism expressed the world outlook of the new middle and business classes, and the second phase the outlook of the broad coalition supporting the New Deal, the third phase expresses mostly the outlook of the "New Class" of professional, university, and media elites.

But the fact is that Jews are themselves heavily represented in this New Class and these elites. Thus they find themselves caught and divided, between a philosophy carrying over from the second phase and the pressure from their fellow members in the elites who have shaped the third phase. Many of those are Jews who feel uneasy about their identity and are trying to expiate their guilt about their own affluence and that of their fathers by embracing a left-wing revolutionary mystique which will in the end destroy them.

FOR myself, I don't feel that the best path is to abandon liberalism, and leave it to the monopoly of those who neither understand nor care about the long sweep of its history and its potential for the future. The strength of liberalism rests with its basic humanism, its sense of human connectedness, its caring and sharing, its concern with equality of access not for the few but for all. The strength of conservatism is its sense of human continuities and of the culture as an organism. The folly of liberalism lies in its tenderness of mind, the folly of conservatism with its hardness of heart.

As a Jew, an American, a human being, I want to help fashion a philosophy which uses the valid elements of both and excludes the scars they leave and the scars they inflict on themselves. This means to combine access with connectedness but also with the sense of the organic in society and culture, and all of them with a tough-minded possibilism which faces the reality principle in our world and time, and doesn't surrender both of them to the fanatics and terrorists.

Call this, if you wish, a kind of new centrism which will combine realism with the creativeness flowing from America's deep revolutions of consciousness and perspective, and fuse them in an affirmation that will move away from the guilt-ridden self-hatred of the traditional liberals. It will be "good for the Jews" because it will be good for the nation and the world.

MAX LERNER *is a syndicated columnist, professor, and author of the forthcoming* Ted and the Kennedy Legend: A Study in Character and Destiny.

Seymour Martin Lipset: Has the vaunted commitment of Jews to Left and liberal causes ended? A myriad of articles has sought to describe and explain a shift to the Right among Jews, supposedly linked to conflicts with other minority groups and women activists over affirmative action; to an awareness that those more disposed to the Left are also more anti-Israel; and, on a higher, more philosophical level, to the recognition that Jews have a stake in a stable, legitimate social order. The more cynical or Marxist-oriented

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analysts account for the supposed change by making the assumption that the wealth and high socioeconomic status of American Jews press them to bring their politics into line with their privileged class position.

These interpretations are logical, but they have one fault—they do not fit the facts. Studies of Jewish attitudes and political behavior continue to find that Jews remain the most liberal white ethnic or religious group in the nation. A late November Gallup release reports that Edward Kennedy, accurately perceived by the populace as the most Left or liberal of the candidates, has a larger lead over Carter among Jews (64-16) than among any other group of Democrats, including blacks and Kennedy's fellow Catholics. Analyses of voting behavior find that American Jews remain more committed to the Democratic party than any other ethnic or religious group, except for blacks. Within the party, as their current presidential nomination preferences indicate, Jews are the segment most disposed to back the more liberal, New Politics wing. In 1972, when McGovern's dovish views were supposedly alienating pro-Israel Jews, he secured about two-thirds of the Jewish vote, more than he received from any other white group. In June 1978, a small majority of California's Jewish voters opposed Proposition 13, while 65 per cent of the electorate favored it, according to a Los Angeles *Times* survey. In November 1978, 69 per cent of the Jews voted for Jerry Brown for governor, a far higher percentage than Brown received from Catholics and Protestants. In the 1978 congressional elections, 72 per cent of the Jews queried as they were leaving polling places told New York *Times*/CBS interviewers that they had voted for Democrats, in contrast to 60 per cent of the Catholics and 45 per cent of the Protestants. Only 16 per cent of the Jewish voters described their political views as conservative, compared with 27 per cent of Catholics and 37 per cent of Protestants.

The same New York *Times*/CBS survey found, as of election day 1978, that Jews were more dovish on issues of foreign policy and defense expenditures than other ethnic or religious groups. Surveys conducted by different pollsters throughout the 70's have reported that Jews are far more liberal than others on social issues, e.g., abortion, premarital sex, civil liberties for dissident views, the rights of homosexuals, and, most surprising of all, affirmative-action, special-preference programs. Proportionately, Jewish backers of affirmative action/quotas outnumber those in the various white nationality and religious groups, but on this issue alone they lag behind blacks.

MUCH of the impression of growing Jewish conservatism has come from the attention given to the views of prominent Jewish intellectuals who have moved from earlier leftist commitments to ones which have been described as neoconservative. In fact, most members of the group so labeled are Democrats and relatively liberal on domestic issues. A few even describe themselves as socialists or social democrats. And in any case, massive surveys of academic opinion taken in 1969 and 1975 by the Carnegie Council Commission on Higher Education indicate that Jewish faculty, who number around one-tenth of all American professors, are far more liberal than their Gentile colleagues.

A great majority of the Jewish public and intellectual elite has remained very liberal on most social and economic matters and in its voting behavior. This conclusion may be countered by the support given to a few moderate Democrats, like Senators Moynihan and Jackson, who are highly visible and important backers of Israel; by the endorsement of a hard-line foreign policy by the small group of "neoconservative" intellectuals; and by the voting behavior of less privileged and more Orthodox Jews still living in high-density urban areas who have backed hard-line law-and-order candidates in local elections. But the more numerous affluent segment of the Jewish community continues to opt for liberals locally as well as nationally, and constitutes the most important source of finances for liberal and Left causes.

What still remains unique about the politics of American Jews is how liberal-Left they are after having become one of the most affluent ethnic-religious groups in the nation. It is the continued liberalism of the Jews that should be commented on and explained, not their relatively minimal drift to the Right.

SEYMOUR MARTIN LIPSET *is professor of political science and sociology, and a senior fellow of the Hoover Institution, Stanford University. He has just edited* The Third Century: America as a Post-Industrial Society.

Theodore R. Mann: The recent developments to which the symposium statement refers do not and should not affect the Jewish community's traditional commitment to liberalism, which I define as a commitment to energetic efforts to eliminate poverty and discrimination, including racial and religious discrimination. So defined, Jewish liberalism is not related to, and should remain unaffected by, the attitudes of others. The impulse to eliminate poverty and discrimination is an important part of the Jewish heritage.

We must not permit others to redefine the words by which we define ourselves, and thereby undermine our most sacred values. The disturbing developments which COMMENTARY recites bear not on the question of whether we are becoming less

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liberal but on whether *others* are—and whether in the future Jews will have fewer liberal allies, an important question in its own right. We, however, will follow our own lights—we hope with a whole host of allies; alone if necessary.

COMMENTARY's litany of recent developments is in itself a highly offensive attack on the concept of liberalism. If indeed few "liberals" protested against the anti-Semitism following Andrew Young's resignation, one must ask, first, whether conservatives protested more (doubtful) and, second, whether this is a reflection on the liberal impulse to eliminate poverty and discrimination, or whether those who are silent in the face of anti-Semitism have not forfeited the right to call themselves liberal.

Others might include in the term liberalism an economic view which favors, to a greater degree than conservatism, government intervention to achieve social goals. Jews, like others, will differ on the question whether poverty in America is more likely to be ameliorated primarily by government or primarily through proper government inducement and regulation of the private sector. There is, I think, a trend toward the latter among Jews. As to laws against discrimination, most are now on the books. Jews in the main, regardless of how they might otherwise define themselves, will continue to want such laws to be vigorously enforced.

Finally, I see no significant movement away from the Democratic party as such. Jewish voting patterns will depend on the candidates selected by both parties. All other things—such as their regard for Israel's security—being equal, were the Democrats to nominate a liberal and the Republicans a non-liberal (by my non-economic definition), I think Jews would vote overwhelmingly Democratic.

THEODORE R. MANN *is chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations and a Philadelphia trial attorney.*

Jacob Neusner: Jews' "traditional" engagement in liberal politics goes back a few generations. In fact the culture built upon the foundations of Judaism is profoundly conservative and truly traditional. So we speak of something contingent and recent. So far as political liberalism favored labor unions and collective bargaining, government engagement in the welfare of the community, and similar programs for the general good, Jews benefited from the programs of liberalism, along with others of their particular sector of society, culture, and economy. So far, these days, as conservatism takes up the struggle for the individual and the right of communities to be different, advances classic arguments for human freedom, and, in the framework of world politics, recognizes the interests of the West and the stake of humanity in those interests, it becomes the labor of Jews, along with others of that same sector of society and economy, to reconsider the claims of conservatism.

The closest analogy to the Jews' situation in this country is difficult to determine. Our thoughts naturally turn to Europe, to Germany. There the Jews had strong enemies and weak friends. Here, at the moment, it is difficult to specify powerful enemies. But clearly, so far as we have interests in politics, we also cannot identify long-term allies, let alone loyal friends. It is not hard to discern those who have little use for us, and less regard, folk who either dislike Jews in particular or Jews as part of some larger sector of society perceived as obstacles. For Jews in overwhelming numbers reject radicalism, stylish liberalism, the mentality of finding reasons not to be concerned at the erosion of America's strength and standing in the world. But Jews in sizable numbers also have yet to come to grips with the pellucid commitment of mainstream conservatism to those same constructive and humane ideals which, to begin with, Jews associate with liberal politics. The reason is that, in general, Jews know about the hostility of the far Right, while choosing to ignore the hostility of the near Left.

Still, there are liberals and there are liberals. Whether or not, in the coming elections, we find ourselves moving out of the Democratic party in still larger numbers than in 1968 and 1972 depends upon the configuration of the Democratic and Republican programs. If the Republicans come out in favor of a Palestinian state, as John Connally has, then I think the Jews nearly unanimously will reject the Republican party. If the Democrats persist in seeking to find that vital center of the political and social framework, balancing the interests of diverse groups and seeking common ground to be shared by them all, then Jews, among other centrists, will locate themselves on Democratic turf. The opposite set of conditions—a Republican candidate clearly committed to a strong state of Israel as a bastion of American interest in the Middle East, a Democrat not—can continue that earthquake of political loyalties which began in the burning of the cities and the disruption of the universities by mob violence. The issues are not fully exhausted by party loyalty. The Jews as a strong force for centrist moderation in the Democratic party may well make a larger contribution to the common good than their taking up positions on the fringes of a Republican party essentially uncomfortable with sizable numbers of Jewish activists. Or, to put it differently, on ethnic grounds, I should rather be at a Democratic than a Republican fund-raiser, though best of all is to stay home, give my money, and vote my conscience.

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What really concerns me in politics is the formation of an iron consensus, without discussion, debate, or even articulated congressional or other political oversight, about the shape of society and culture. That consensus, which even now takes shape in massive federal involvement in the definition and formation of American culture, takes for granted that some cultural and social groups are more legitimate than others, and that difference is more tolerable in one form (for instance, racial) than in another (for instance, religious-cultural). I fear for our future in this free society when we go out of style (as we do) or find ourselves treated as outside the framework of legitimate cultural-social expression (as is now the case). While, like most Jews, I strongly favor affirmative action in the form of appropriate assistance to heretofore disadvantaged groups, I fear that the "scheduled castes," and they alone, enjoy the attention and support of the federal cultural establishment.

In this regard, our place is among the New Ethnics, also omitted from the catalogue of certified minorities, who regard themselves, as we see our community, as a fully legitimate cultural and religious (and also racial) alternative in our society. But, like the Jews, the New Ethnics are not yet in style. Now we have to consider that the groups appropriately certified as disadvantaged enjoy massive federal attention and concern, so that their cultural initiatives find recognition, their symbolic expressions receive sympathetic attention, and their educational and social programs are given massive funds, while groups such as ourselves, not enjoying certification, find themselves ignored. No body, after all, boasts about the percentage of Jews in a given federal agency or at a given rank within the civil service or public utilities! It is this powerful impression that the force of federal patronage runs contrary to the nurture of (quite secular) Jewish cultural and social interests in this country, rather than the troubling issues of the hour's ration of Middle Eastern sensations, which I think forms a long-term concern. At the moment there can be no doubt that the Center has room for us, the Left does not, and the enlightened Right would be glad to find a place for much larger numbers of Jews than presently want it.

IN ALL, I think it more likely that the Jews will reshape centrist liberalism than that liberalism will lose the Jews. Indeed, so far as the Center of the Democratic party has moved itself to the Right of that political spectrum defined, let us say, by the issues of the Great Society, the Jews have done their share, and more than their share, in effecting that redefinition and movement. The development of a significant body of conservative opinion among Jews is only part of what has happened, and what will continue to happen, over the next decades. Shifts in the self-understanding of conservatism and of the Jews, on the one side, and vast changes in the social foundations of politics, on the other, amply account for these shifts. They do not in any measure disturb that established Jewish commitment to the biblical and talmudic ideals of social justice and equity, for what is happening is not a movement in favor (let us say) of "persecution and oppression" but a clearer notion of the true requirements of justice and equity. In this regard, the powerful minds of the Jewish intellectual community have had a far greater impact upon Jewish public opinion—as upon public opinion at large—than is generally understood. Jesse Jackson has done much less to reshape the consensus within Jewry than Nathan Glazer, Daniel Bell, Irving Kristol, Henry Kissinger, and the editor of COMMENTARY.

JACOB NEUSNER, *a member of the National Council on the Humanities, is professor of religious studies, University Professor, and the Ungerleider Distinguished Scholar of Judaic Studies at Brown University.*

Jack Newfield: I have so many disagreements with the symposium statement, I hardly know where to begin. So I will begin autobiographically.

During the 60's I was both a civil-rights activist, twice arrested, and a supporter of Israel. Although my friends in the New Left like Tom Hayden were hostile to Israel, it was not very hard for me to harmonize my two gut sympathies. Goodman, Chaney, and Schwerner, two Jews from New York and a black from rural Mississippi, were killed together while registering voters in Neshoba County. Rabbi Joachim Prinz spoke at the August 1963 March on Washington, and sang "We Shall Overcome" with Martin Luther King, Jr.

Today things are much more polarized, and I find it more difficult, and more lonely, to think of myself as a supporter of both Israel, and what used to be called civil rights.

The one part of the statement that I can agree with is that the events since August 1979 have affected my thinking as a Jew. I was hurt and enraged by the conduct of Jesse Jackson. His words in many places were plainly anti-Semitic in that they singled Jews out for abuse. As my friend Roger Wilkins has said, Jackson's remark about being sick and tired of hearing about the Holocaust is the most obscene comment I've ever heard. Jackson's attacks on the "Jewish media" and on "Jewish slumlords" reveal him as a black Father Coughlin. (Jackson attacked David Shipler of the New York *Times* for Jewish bias, and Shipler isn't even Jewish.)

But I draw no generalizations from Jackson. He is an individual trying to hustle Arab money to finance his paper organization. If this doesn't

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work, a man of Jackson's character would go to the Mafia tomorrow with a new line, seeking its funds. The same is true of Roy Innis and other hustlers for hire.

But the question asked is, should these events justify a reconsideration of a commitment to liberalism, and to the Democratic party?

This leads one to contemplate what I call John Connally's "cross of crude" speech, where he plainly said America should sacrifice the security of Israel for a steady source of crude oil. Connally is a much more powerful, much more *representative*, and much more dangerous person than Jackson. His scary speech was apparently read in advance by Henry Kissinger, and was ratified by such conservatives as Kevin Phillips. These men, and the forces in the country behind them, are much more of a threat to Israel than any black leaders. And many of the defenders of Israel remain traditional Democratic liberals like Edward Kennedy, Elizabeth Holtzman, Howard Metzenbaum, as well as socialists like Irving Howe and Michael Harrington.

In recent history, the great pain to me has not been caused by liberals betraying Israel, but by Jews betraying liberalism. I speak of those Jewish intellectuals who publicly endorsed two criminals in 1972 named Nixon and Agnew. I speak of a polarizing mayor named Edward Koch who says that "most blacks are anti-Semitic" and who attacks Judge Bruce Wright without even knowing the facts.

WHAT I believe is that in the long run, Jews and blacks, the middle class and the working class, have much more in common than they have in disagreement. Despite quotas and *Bakke*, we share vast mutual interests, class interests against the interests of the multinational corporations, the oil companies, the banks, the AMA, the utilities, the right wing, the Connallys, and the Reagans.

We share a common ground on lower interest rates, cheaper energy, tax reform, full employment, greater civil liberties, national health insurance, better schools, less street crime, less pollution of the air and the land, less government and corporate corruption. We are consumers. We are borrowers. We breathe the same air and walk the same streets.

Does COMMENTARY really think that a position on quotas is more important, or more relevant, than all these issues that determine the daily life of ordinary people?

Also, given the public remarks of Connally, Billy Carter, Kevin Phillips, Spiro Agnew, and others, singling out "liberals" for turning against Israel strikes me as just as unfair and inaccurate as Jesse Jackson singling out "Jews" for turning against black equality. They are equally irrational perceptions of reality.

We must heal the tear between blacks and Jews. We must find Jewish leaders who are willing to denounce racism, and we must find black leaders willing to denounce anti-Semitism. As Vernon Jordan said in his memorable speech in Kansas City: "The only ones who benefit from black-Jewish tensions are the enemies of both groups. It is time to stop providing joy to the cross burners and bomb throwers. It is time to strengthen the traditional, fruitful alliance between blacks and Jews. That alliance must be based on mutual respect, concern for each group's vital interests, and a refusal to categorize all blacks or Jews for the actions or statements of some."

So, in the end, I believe that the interests of both Jews and blacks can still be best represented through what COMMENTARY calls the standard liberal agenda.

I happen to favor affirmative action, but not strict quotas, although reasonable people may differ. I support Israel, although I oppose many specific policies of the Begin government, from settlements to South Africa. Reasonable people may differ.

But I cannot believe that differences on these issues justify any retreat from fundamental commitments to economic equality, racial justice, and civil liberties, from the moral and intellectual roots of the standard liberal agenda.

Those wise men of the tribe who told us to vote for Nixon in 1972 "for the sake of Israel," should be remembered for their wretched judgment.

I know who my friends are and I know who my enemies are. Vernon Jordan is my brother. John Connally is my enemy.

JACK NEWFIELD *is a senior editor of the* Village Voice.

Nathan Perlmutter: In 1972, during the Nixon-McGovern presidential campaign, a friend of mine, a Jew, and a credentialed liberal, quipped, "I've been a lifelong Republican—these past few months." And indeed, the 90 per cent of the Jewish community which opted for Johnson over Goldwater and for Humphrey over Nixon, cracked. Nixon scored a landslide victory among Jews. Well, not quite. He polled about 35 per cent of the Jewish vote. McGovern, the Democrats' most liberal candidate, fared worse among his party's most liberal bloc, Jews, than had any of his predecessors in modern times—and still received 65 per cent of their votes. The liberal candidate had simultaneously won a whopping majority and suffered a resounding defeat among Jews. The conservative candidate, while being trounced by Jews, won their unprecedented support.

The significance of this curious movement in 1972's Jewish voting patterns was shunted aside, though hardly blunted, by the 1976 presidential

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elections. Confronted by candidates Ford and Carter, both centrists without Nixon's and McGovern's clearly visible field markings of "conservative" and "liberal," 85 per cent of us voted Democratic, our quadrennial conditioned reflex.

Recently, scolds have remarked anew on a seeming desertion of liberal ranks by Jews. My own view is that the politics of Jews are indeed undergoing marked change, but that our loyalty to the liberal polity has been constant. In this process, we are learning that some of our allies of yesteryear are now our adversaries, and that among yesteryear's adversaries, some are now allies. In neither relationship is mutual affection a meaningful factor. In both, perceived self-interest is.

The most contentious domestic issue on which Jews and their erstwhile allies have split is quotas. For having filed *amicus* briefs in the *DeFunis, Bakke, Weber,* and *Fullilove* cases challenging the constitutionality of racial quotas in admission to colleges, in rights related to employment, and in rights to secure government contracts, Jews have been charged with defection from the liberal camp. But we manned the same legal ramparts in the 1950's and 1960's when we challenged legally-sanctioned racism in school admissions, in access to places of public accommodation, in housing, and in employment. Then, we fought alongside blacks and liberals so that race, color, and creed would be rendered irrelevant to our rights as Americans and be removed as a basis for either state-favored or state-imposed handicaps. Today, black and liberal organizations square off against us, defend race as a criterion for state favor, and, glancing to our flanks, we find that we are joined in the courts and in the opinion polls by strangers to our earlier briefs—ethnic groups.

If any generalization can be made with some degree of safety concerning the foreign-policy dispositions of Jews, it is that we have been against authoritarian governments, and for their freedom-aspiring subjects; we have been against fervid nationalism and have been banner carriers for One World. Given our experiences with dictatorships and with ethnocentrism, it is no accident that we exceeded by far our 2.7 per cent of the population on letterheads of organizations which championed the United Nations, which raised money for independence movements in the Third World, and which opposed high military budgets. In these stances, we were an integral part of the liberal movement. But something happened to our quorum.

The United Nations General Assembly, with Newspeak aplomb, has declared Zionism to be racism. Many of the Third World nations whose governance by the likes of England, France, and Belgium evoked our compassion and our assistance, are today aligned with the Soviet Union, the world's largest grist-mill for institutionalized anti-Semitism, and with the Arab nations against Israel.

Our Jewish experience as scapegoat in war has been an added propellant in our pursuit of peace. And so we have felt at home in liberal and socialist camps. After all, such groups fought for progressive change with our weaponry, words, whereas the generals and the rightists resisted change, with force. Here, too, something has gone amiss. The generals who are critical of détente are wary not of democratic Europe or Jewish and democratic Israel, but of the totalitarian Soviet Union, Israel's spoiler and Jewry's implacable enemy. The leaders of international socialism, led by the impeccable Willy Brandt and the peccable Bruno Kreisky, welcome to the fold of socialist *Realpolitik* Yasir Arafat, sealing their troth with embraces. And the nonaligned nations, our planet's "little guys," professing independence from both the Communist and capitalist behemoths, form a pack and snarl accusations that Zionism is guilty of crimes against humanity, accusations heretofore made only by Nazis.

Andrew Young, in the wake of whose resignation brewing black anti-Semitism verbally bubbled and geysered, is not only the symbol of diverging interests between blacks and Jews, but between Jews and traditional liberals in the area of foreign policy. The latter rift is succinctly evident in a Harris poll conducted shortly after Young's resignation. Asked, "Was Andrew Young right to sit down with the PLO?," 50 per cent of liberal respondents said yes and 39 per cent no. But conservatives scored 32 per cent yes and 60 per cent no, the smallest grouping supporting Young's illicit assignation, the largest critical of it—save Jews.

Does this suggest that liberals are no longer our allies and that conservatives are, as domestically we pursue the ideal of a compassionate state which neither favors nor punishes its citizens on the grounds of race, and, abroad, we press for the security of Israel? Not really.

To the extent that liberals support state-sanctioned racist criteria for participation in either the public or private sector, they are our and democracy's antagonists. To the extent that in their sympathy for those who do not enjoy self-rule, liberals are indifferent to the military-strategic implications for the United States and for Israel of a self-rule that is dictatorial or faces toward the Soviet Union, they are our and democracy's antagonists.

But it was Kaiser-Aluminum which conceived and implemented the racial-quota system we contested in *Weber*. The company's conservative rugged-individualism crumbled before the prospect of possibly losing government contracts in retaliation for not practicing reverse discrimination. Academic institutions thought to be the fountainhead of intellectual elitism and the merit system have indulged in *de facto* quotas lest they lose government grants. Industrialists vie with one another to sell their products to the Soviet Union,

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and in consummating their sales, nourish Communism, their nemesis—and Jewry's.

If liberal ideology lists its ship portside, conservative greed lists it starboard. Jewish interests are secure in neither vessel. The liberal agenda and ours are no longer coincident and at times not even parallel. While, alas, commonality with the conservative agenda is only rhetoric-deep. If, here and there, liberals and conservatives are potential allies, the alliance will evolve on an ad-hoc basis when our interests coincide, and not through declared togetherness that glosses over our different promptings and the divergent strategies required to realize our respective agendas.

JUST as the liberal agenda has been forming and reforming in response to its ideology, and the conservative agenda in response to the self-interests of its business-minded patrons, so must the Jewish agenda look to Jewish interests. Happily, or at least fortunately, Jewish interests are in close harmony with democracy's ideals—the supremacy of the person rather than of his race or class and the security of the democratic system vis-à-vis totalitarianism. *Group rights* effectively mean government intercession in behalf of their realization. In a popular democracy that means the courtship by politicians of the largest group and/or the one with the most leverage. Therein lies the danger of quotas for all minorities, including blacks. And accommodations with the Soviets and their client states, which strengthen the Communist sphere of influence, render democratic America relatively weaker, thereby exposing Jews to dangers the auguries of which are even now plainly evident from the Gulags of the Soviet Union west to the United Nations on 42nd Street.

Jews continue to abhor racial discrimination. But we add: no matter if its victims now include whites. And Jews continue to hanker for One World. But not one without Israel.

As for the implications of this for the 1980 elections, much will depend on the candidates of the Democratic and Republican parties. In 1972, Jews softly but audibly suggested that simply because a candidate wore a name-tag marked liberal, he shouldn't take us for granted. In 1980, if unheeded, given our residential deployment, another 25 per cent swing just may be a determining factor in the making of the President.

NATHAN PERLMUTTER *is national director of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith.*

Marc F. Plattner: The questions posed here arise not primarily because of changes in the ways that American Jews perceive their own interests but because of changes in the character of American liberalism. One cannot sensibly address the issue of liberalism and the Jews without first making it clear what one understands by liberalism.

The most fundamental and unambiguous meaning of liberalism is that which is expressed in the phrase "liberal democracy." Liberalism in this sense refers to a political regime based upon individual rights, private property, religious toleration, representative government, and equality before the law. Liberalism so understood traces its philosophic roots to the thought of John Locke, and its basic principles are embodied in the founding documents of the American Republic. Regimes devoted to these principles have usually been those most hospitable to the interests of their Jewish citizens, as well as to the interests of religious and ethnic minorities in general. This is more true than ever today, and thus American Jews have every reason to maintain their full commitment to a liberal political order. But since this commitment has been shared by the vast majority of Americans, it does not tell us a great deal about the choices that Jews have made in American electoral politics.

The term liberalism also had a relatively clear meaning in practical political matters from the 1930's to the mid-1960's, a period almost exactly coinciding with the middle third of the 20th century. The New Deal liberalism that dominated the Democratic party during this era was characterized by support for the welfare state, strong labor unions, a mixed economy with a healthy private sector, and economic growth; by sympathy toward the interests of ethnic and racial minorities; by an anti-fascist and then an anti-Communist foreign policy; and by a concern for preserving and fostering liberal democratic regimes and principles abroad. As the party most receptive to ethnic minorities and one that had a principal political base in the large cities where so many American Jews resided, the Democrats naturally attracted a large majority of Jewish voters.

Since the late 1960's, however, the liberalism born with the New Deal has steadily eroded both as a distinctive political outlook and as a force in electoral politics. In part, this has been a consequence of success: conservatives and Republicans have largely come to accept much of the old liberal program. And in part it has been an inevitable consequence of the passage of time: new issues have emerged that cut across the old ideological divisions, and changing circumstances and concerns have cast some old issues in a new light. But New Deal liberalism was not allowed to decline gracefully into an honored old age; instead, it was scorned and supplanted by a decisive faction within the Democratic party itself.

In retrospect, the fundamental decency of mid-century liberalism and its instinctive loyalty to the noblest aspects of the American political tradition seem more admirable than ever. But in the

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light of liberalism's unseemly disintegration, it is hard not to conclude that its intellectual foundations—its understanding of its own basic principles—were woefully shallow. How else can one explain why so many liberals were swept up in or cowed by the radical assaults of the late 1960's? Accustomed to regarding themselves as champions of the poor and the oppressed, they could not find an adequate response to those who espoused illiberal principles, proposed illiberal measures, and took illiberal actions allegedly on behalf of the poor and the oppressed.

As a result of this abdication, the liberal label has increasingly been bestowed upon men and measures that are hostile not only to the spirit of New Deal liberalism but to the spirit of liberal democracy itself. It is no surprise, then, that what today often passes for liberalism may encompass not merely support for quotas and sympathy for the PLO, but the countenancing of public expressions of anti-Semitism. It has been clear for some time that open hostility to Israel and to Jews is now more likely to come from the Left than the Right, and insofar as those currently called liberals are unwilling to attack the Left, they will be swept along willy-nilly by these currents. Such developments can only hasten a rethinking on the part of American Jews of their long-standing self-identification as liberals—a rethinking to which they, like many other Americans, are being driven in any event by the new face of American liberalism.

THE immediate consequences of all this for electoral politics remain uncertain because it is so unclear at this point not only who the presidential nominees will be in 1980 but how they will define their views in the course of the upcoming primaries. I myself have never before faced the start of an election year with so little sense of which of the candidates I would like to see elected President, and I suspect that many American Jews share this uncertainty. Nonetheless, given the still lingering influence of past allegiances, it is reasonably safe to predict that a majority of Jews will once again vote Democratic, and that the size of this majority will be somewhat greater if Kennedy is the Democratic nominee. But a Republican candidate who was perceived as strongly pro-Israel and relatively moderate on other issues would probably run a very close race among Jews against President Carter. In any case, I believe that the days when the Democratic party label alone was enough to assure a presidential candidate of the "Jewish vote" are rapidly coming to an end.

MARC F. PLATTNER *is on the staff of the Twentieth Century Fund and a consulting editor of the* Public Interest.

Earl Raab: Adherents of the "standard liberal agenda" have been shrinking in number; so have its Jewish adherents. But saying this is about as startling as noting that drivers of eight-cylinder cars have been diminishing in number.

Democrats and self-styled liberal Americans have been voting for Proposition 13's all over the country. That is not part of the standard liberal agenda. The persistent standard-bearers of *that* agenda have become increasingly ghettoized. The bulk of the old liberal corps has taken on a new pattern in domestic philosophy. As usual, the Jews epitomize—or, if you will, caricature—that new pattern.

A recent regional survey of Jewish attitudes suggests the nature of the pattern. By at least a three-to-one margin in each case, Jews supported the admission of all Vietnamese refugees who could not find refuge elsewhere; supported the active involvement of the Jewish community in fighting job discrimination against blacks; and supported necessary government measures to improve health care for the aged. And about one-third made a distinction between quota programs, which they opposed, and affirmative-action programs, which they supported.

At the same time, by about a two-to-one margin in both cases, these same Jews supported a statutory limitation on government spending and opposed the creation of more public-service jobs with federal funds. And by an even larger margin, they supported longer sentences for criminals.

The Jews remain *socially liberal* with respect to their active political concern about refugees, the oppressed, the deprived, and the poor. They are significantly more responsive on such questions than any other segment of the white population—in the case of the Vietnamese refugees, more responsive than *any* segment of the population.

But the Jews are *fiscally conservative* in about the same degree as the rest of the white population, but more strongly than Jews have been previously. And the Jews are *law-and-order conservative*, again like the rest of the population, but more explicitly than Jews have been in the past. The terms "liberal" and "conservative" as used here remain happily undefined, beyond referring to apparent distance from the standard liberal agenda.

This is the new pattern, for the Jews; and, to some extent, for most of the standard liberal host. It has some obvious implications for political choice which are lost on no one.

However, there is another matter which tends to differentiate Jewish consciousness even more sharply from erstwhile "standard liberal" perceptions. The ADL once published a book about anti-Jewish hostility entitled *Danger from the Right*, certainly a standard liberal item. The modern version would have to be entitled *Danger from the Left*. The reason is compounded of con-

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nected concerns about Israel and about American anti-Semitism.

On the Middle Eastern front, American Jews have become acutely aware of the central anti-Israel role of the Soviet Union. They were aware of Cuban troops in Syria. They are aware of the PLO's connection with the Soviet Union, however strained through Levantine nationalism; they are aware of the PLO's self-styled Marxist-Leninist bent. In short, the Camp David agreement with Egypt, and the subsequent prominence of the PLO issue, have made Jews more aware than ever before that the operative anti-Israel force in the world is a left-wing force, not always a captive of the Soviets, but always ideologically anti-American and anti-Western democracy.

Furthermore, this left-wing force is linked, often by the PLO itself, to a Third World context. In Africa and in Latin America, as well as in the Middle East, wherever this left-wing force emerges, it inevitably emerges with anti-Israel rhetoric. As it does in the industrialized nations, including the United States.

In the United States, it has long been noted that certain elements of the standard liberal establishment have displayed a flirtatious subservience to this left-wing force in its Third World guise—notably some sectors of the intellectuals, clergy, and urban "activist" bureaucracy. With a newly clarified sense of what's going on in the world, wider circles of Jews have noted the soft approach of these particular "liberal" sectors to issues concerning Israel and to the PLO. Nor was it lost on Jews that the dangerous singling out of American Jewry following the Andrew Young resignation stemmed from some of these liberal sectors and was not signally rejected by some others.

In brief, significant numbers of American Jews have self-consciously lost their deadly innocence on this score.

WHAT will this mean for political choices by American Jewry in 1980? Perhaps never before has the specific presidential candidate been so important. Most Jews would still like to find their candidate within the Democratic party. The Democratic party still stands for the kind of general social liberalism to which Jews cling. The Republican party has long been stigmatized as the party without social compassion. But there is something else.

American Jewry has scarcely forgotten the danger from the Right. Jews will not trust oil-company candidates, nor will they embrace prophets of social or political repression, no matter how widely they may bare their teeth in friendly grins toward Israel. Right-wing extremism and anti-Semitism are still seen as companion pieces, and the Republican party is seen as the potential site of such right-wing extremism.

The Jews have no place to go but to the Center. They will remain heavily Democratic in registration, but will become more independent than ever in the voting booth. They will vote for a candidate who stands for some optimal combination of social liberalism and fiscal conservatism; but, most of all, they will be wary of any Democratic party candidate who does not project a clear recognition of the danger from the Left—in terms of the Middle East, for example, and in terms of America's military and moral strength. If they find no such candidate, some may indeed drift to the Republican party, if that party's candidate does not frighten them.

EARL RAAB *is executive director of the Jewish Community Relations Council of San Francisco and co-author (with Seymour Martin Lipset) of* The Politics of Unreason.

Stanley Rothman: It is a little difficult to respond to the symposium questions for two reasons. First, the opening statement makes certain assumptions which I do not accept. For example, not all "liberals" (whatever that much abused term means) support quotas. It is true that some use "affirmative action" as a code-word for quotas. Others, however, do not, and I feel that a good case can be made for some forms of affirmative action. Further, the amount of black anti-Semitism can be exaggerated, and blanket statements are unwarranted. The tendency to lump all black criticism of Israel or of certain Jewish organizations under the same rubric is unfair. After all, many whites, including some Jews, are making similar criticisms. I am not particularly fond of the PLO, but the issues are quite complex and it is not particularly helpful to assume (as the statement does) that all of those who feel that the PLO must be taken into account are *ipso facto* hostile to Israel or to Jews in general. Jews cannot expect blacks to love them or to subordinate their perceived interests to Jewish needs and concerns.

On the other hand, it cannot be denied that the issues raised are important ones. Many so-called liberals do support quotas; many do romanticize the PLO (as they do almost any Third World movement which seems radical and/or anti-American); and at least some black leaders, partly because they identify with such movements and assume quotas to be a right, have revealed considerable hostility to Jews *per se*.

HAVING said all this, I still find it difficult to respond to the questions posed for a second reason. My disillusion with liberalism stems from the transformations it underwent during the 60's. At

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that time many liberals were saying all sorts of things which they have now conveniently forgotten. For example, they were comparing the United States to Nazi Germany and Lyndon Johnson to Hitler, and they were romanticizing the "saintly" North Vietnamese. Even more importantly, a number of them were charging (Jewish) teachers in New York City with educational genocide against black youth; suggesting that the violence against (Jewish) shopkeepers by some black youth was the result of exploitation; and arguing that (Jewish and other) parents who feared to bus their children to predominantly black schools were all racists. Those who tried to suggest that the problems were more complex were often dismissed as evil people and were accused of blaming the victims for the crimes committed by the "oppressors."

It gradually became clear to me that a good deal of what was passing for liberalism had less to do with the concern for the lives of ordinary people than it had to do with the opportunity which the race issue provided to satisfy other needs. At least in part, the movement of the 60's provided a segment of the upper-middle class with a fine opportunity to feel superior as they urged the "respectable" working class to make sacrifices which they never contemplated making themselves. It also gave them the opportunity to vent a hatred which they felt for American culture and institutions. To such people, the pain of the working-class and lower-middle class Jews among whom I had grown up did not matter. They were non-persons.

It was then that a credibility gap developed for me: as I saw my parents and their friends hurt and maligned, I began to wonder if I had not been wrong in accepting a number of liberal stereotypes which had previously informed my perception of the world. Perhaps it was an oversimplification to say that the reaction to busing on the part of Irish and Italian ethnics was simply racism; that most businessmen were exploiters; and that every conflict between police and blacks (or students) was the result of police brutality. And as I reexamined my views I began to find that all sorts of "truths" which I had uncritically believed were at least problematic. What startled me most was the realization that many liberal intellectuals were as bound by narrow irrational prejudices as were ordinary folk. They simply rationalized them better, and published them in the guise of objective research.

THUS I had changed my views in important ways before the issues raised by the symposium became salient. I must say that the attitudes of too many liberals on these and other current issues further persuade me that I was right to change. The fact is that many such attitudes are derived from the revolution in liberal sensibilities which began during the 60's.

This brings me to a rather painful point. My own research indicates that during the 60's Jewish intellectuals played a key role in creating and spreading the gospel of "Amerika the ugly," and the stereotypes which I outlined earlier. In the academy, in textbooks, on television, in the movies, as advisers to those in power, and in the student movement their influence may well have been critical. Their views have now spread to other segments of the population with consequences that have been quite harmful to both America and Israel in a number of ways.

Such Jews (and they were usually "deracinated" Jews) never constituted more than a small segment of the Jewish community, but they were instinctively supported—or regarded sympathetically—by substantial numbers of Jewish liberals. The support derived from a tendency to welcome movements which were seen (usually unconsciously) as weakening the dominant Christian culture. Despite their success in this country, all too many Jews were convinced that their only enemies were on the Right, a Right which they identified with Christian-based anti-Semitism.

Historically they were correct. Unfortunately, they failed to realize, despite the lessons of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, that a triumph for the Left could be even more destructive of their ideal and material interests. Some have belatedly recognized this and have finally decided that America isn't all that bad. Unfortunately, their change of heart may have come too late. We witness a kind of public anomie which will probably continue to grow as we fail—partly because of it—to deal effectively with the very real problems which confront us.

IT IS hard to predict what those Jewish liberals who preserve at least some sense of their Jewish identity will do under such circumstances. For one thing, given American dependence on oil, and the decline of American power to act in the international sphere, increasing numbers of Americans (and not only liberals) are going to refuse to maintain a commitment to Israel which seems to jeopardize their standard of living. Support for negotiations with the PLO, therefore, will become increasingly widespread. For another, old habits die hard. Not that it really matters all that much. The influence of the Jewish intellectual community on the cultural and political life of this country is now on the wane for a whole host of reasons, not the least of which is the revolution in American sensibilities which we helped bring about.

STANLEY ROTHMAN *teaches political science at Smith College. He is completing a book on the role of Jews in the New Left.*

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Ronald Sanders: Was it Bismarck who said that if you're not a socialist at twenty you have no heart and if you're still a socialist at fifty you have no brains? This seems to become more like wisdom the closer I get to the latter age. I must admit, I do still like to think of myself as a socialist and a liberal, just as I did at twenty; it's the world that's changed, I keep telling myself, not me. But then this is merely to spell out the real meaning of the remark: a conservative is someone who doesn't adapt to change, even if his ideas are still those of the radical of yesteryear. So are we forced to concede that, to be a middle-aged liberal, one must be ready to surrender or compromise old loyalties—such as, to take a most significant example for myself and many others, a commitment to the continuing integrity and security of the state of Israel?

How can I ever forget that radiantly sunny day when, with a group of fellow high-school students from Brooklyn, I visited the UN at Lake Success shortly after it had voted for the creation of the Jewish state? We marched from the train arm-in-arm singing Spanish Civil War songs, World War II fighting songs, Shostakovich's "United Nations on the March," and *"Tsena, Tsena,"* one after the other. I still saw the world this way when I began teaching history at one of the New York city colleges in the late 50's; but by 1965, my last year there, things had begun to change. In one of my evening classes there was a handsome young couple from Argentina; soon to be married, they were preparing to face life together as countrymen of Che Guevara, in spirit as well as fact. The course covered European history from 1914 to 1945, and during most of it there was scarcely a point on which my eyes did not meet theirs in passionate mutual understanding; when I talked about French Resistance heroes they wept openly, and I nearly did, too, right in front of the class. Then I began to talk about the Holocaust, and their passion steadily subsided; of course they accepted Jewish suffering under Nazism as part of their moral universe, but there obviously was something about my Jewish-history approach to the subject that bothered them. One evening after class they asked me if I was Jewish, and when I said yes, the romance came to an end. It would have been easy to dismiss them in my mind as conventional anti-Semites, but I found their particular conventions disturbing. Being not just a Jew but a committed one—and they had come to know perfectly well where I stood on Israel—I was, in their eyes, *objectively* reactionary.

Now, I'm afraid it is true that in one area my political outlook has not merely stood still over the years but moved a bit to the Right—that of American foreign policy. In spite of the disaster of Vietnam and all the justifiable reasons idealistic Latin Americans have for hating the State Department, I can no longer imagine that the spread of Communist influence abroad is a matter of indifference to me; and I cannot share what seems to be the instinct of many liberals to oppose American commitments in virtually any part of the world where the going gets rough. Allowing for the elements of crotchety middle age behind these views, they seem above all to be the result, indeed, of a dialectic of Jewish commitment. Anyone sensitive to the Russian Jewish history of the past eighty years or so is particularly aware of the ways in which the Soviets have perverted the ideals of their revolution. And I, like most committed Jews, have long found the realities of Israel to be the main stumbling block in the way of easy endorsement of liberal clichés concerning American foreign policy.

Shall I simply surrender, then, to the dialectic that seems to want to make me objectively a conservative? I don't want to, and in spite of everything I believe I don't have to yet. Why is it that, though my responses usually tend to the Right when the discussion is on the level of generalization and rhetoric, I find myself becoming more liberal when the isues are dealt with concretely? I was once about to share some critical views on Kissinger with a nominally Jewish graduate of 1960's campus radicalism, when suddenly he asserted that Kissinger had, after fleeing from Nazi Germany, ultimately contributed to the creation of another Nazi Germany here; I thereupon became a raving conservative. Why does so much "progressive" rhetoric have to include aspersions on the Holocaust? Whenever I hear Zionism being referred to as "racist" and "genocidal" I feel like standing to the Right of Menachem Begin. Yet, when I stand face-to-face with Palestinian Arabs in Gaza, East Jerusalem, and the West Bank, or with Israeli Arabs in Nazareth, and talk about their genuine grievances and aspirations, then I become a liberal—like more than a few Israelis. Moshe Dayan recently told the New York *Times* that, for the sake of real peace, "you have to know the Arabs and to like them," as he does. I would add: at least know something about them; there is more in this than in all your Third World ideology.

It seems to me that the problems are basically the same in our major domestic challenge to Jewish liberal traditions—that of the present crisis in the black-Jewish relationship. Just as there were blacks ten years ago who were ready to see "genocide" in the fumblings of any Jewish schoolteacher, so also are there some today who see "racist" implications in Israel's relations with South Africa. In the other direction, there are Jews who continue to trample on black sensitivities by being patronizing. But does all this mean that one of the most vital and important intergroup relationships in American history is to dissolve in a flood of mere rhetoric and careless attitudinizing? I can discuss the faults of Israel's foreign policy as long as I am not met with sweep-

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ing ideological condemnations of the state's moral foundations. As for the real bone of contention between Jews and blacks today, the problem of quotas and affirmative action, I can only say in this short space that I for one—and I am not alone in this—fail to see why the Jewish commitment that causes me to support Israel's existence and integrity should also cause me to support the *Bakke* decision. "Quota" is a scare word and the meaning of "affirmative action" can often be vague, but, the problems of semantics aside, I think the University of California at Davis was doing the right thing. The major Jewish organizations have not properly represented committed Jews who are liberals on this issue; perhaps we need an organization of our own.

RONALD SANDERS, *formerly the editor of* Midstream, *is the author of* Lost Tribes and Promised Lands: The Origins of American Racism *and of the forthcoming* The Days Grow Short, *a biography of Kurt Weill.*

Alexander M. Schindler: The symposium statement scarcely opens a dialogue. It enters a brief. It advances the argument that because some liberals have taken positions inimical to Jewish interests, Jews should abandon their liberal commitments. This argument is flawed in that it is predicated on assumptions which distort the truth.

Just where, for instance, is there the wide support for quotas among liberals of which COMMENTARY speaks? I do not find it, not among Jewish liberals supporting affirmative action, or even among blacks. Indeed, a recent study established that a preponderant majority of blacks are resolutely opposed to quotas. Why shouldn't they be? After all, blacks too and not just Jews were "quota-ed" to death, squeezed out of industry after industry by such a means.

A diminishing enthusiasm for Israel among liberals? Perhaps so. Yet this diminution cuts across *all* segments of American society, alas. It obtains in conservative ranks as well. More to the point, adverse sentiment is fueled in no small measure by forces from the Right, by oil companies tripping over petrodollar-laden bankers in their mutual effort to please and appease their oil-rich client states.

In Congress, we still count first on liberals to stand at Israel's side. We look to Church as we once looked to Humphrey. Is he a reactionary? Is Kennedy? Connally is a most ominous cloud on America's political horizon. Is he a liberal? In the wake of the Andrew Young affair, a study of voting patterns was made which disclosed that the record of black and Jewish legislators is virtually identical, on domestic matters—*and* on Israel!

The paucity of liberal protest against post-Andrew Young anti-Semitism troubles me. But is the disaffection or cowardice of some allies sufficient cause for abandoning the quest? In any event, let us note that while there was too great a silence in the liberal community, most of this anti-Semitism was given its blatant *expression* in the camps of radicalism and reaction.

Do not misunderstand me—I am not saying that such developments can safely be ignored. We must see them and weigh them. They may well compel us to alter our liberal strategies. But nothing that I have seen so far persuades me to abandon my commitment to the liberal ideal.

WILL these developments lead to a significant erosion of Jewish support for the Democratic party in 1980? I do not think so. That is to say, there well might be such an erosion but it will come for reasons other than ideology. The identity of the banner-bearer will surely be the dominant factor. A Carter-Bush confrontation will bring one result, a Connally-Carter contest quite another.

I am aware of the conventional wisdom which holds that Jews are increasingly voting a more moderate position. This may well be true in local and state elections. It has not yet been fully established on a national level (remember McGovern?). I have a sneaking suspicion that if there is a clear choice along ideological lines, with, say, a Kennedy confronting a Reagan, most Jews will close the curtain of the voting booth, take a deep breath, and vote for Kennedy.

It is true, of course, that the Jewish community in its corporate form has become more moderate. It has turned inward and away from the world. It pays lip-service to the liberal ideal but is less than fervent in its pursuit of that ideal. What is needed, therefore, is not to have the Jewish community reassess its liberal commitment, but rather revive and restore it.

Liberalism, as I understand it, spurs us to create through the political process a society which is compassionate and open and respects individual existence in its infinite variety. This is precisely the kind of society which has always been safest for the Jew. And because it is also a just society, it is more congruent with that message which we presumably bear.

ALEXANDER M. SCHINDLER *is president of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations.*

Joseph Shattan: The last time that the coincidence of Jewish and liberal interests was "called into question" was on the eve of the 1972 McGovern-Nixon presidential race. Then, too, not a few observers felt that the

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anti-Semitism of the New Left, the growing tension between the Jewish and black communities, and the unwillingness of many liberals to take a forthright stand against "progressive" anti-Semitism would surely bring about a "significant movement away from the Democratic party." That Nixon was openly pro-Israel, and was obviously the favorite candidate of the Israelis, while McGovern was widely perceived as an isolationist, seemed to clinch the argument. Indeed, so convincing did the case for Jewish conservatism appear that many spoke as though the Jews had *already* become a part of the emerging Republican majority.

In the event, things did not quite work out as expected. McGovern won almost two out of three Jewish votes, doing better among the Jews than Adlai Stevenson had done in 1956. Clearly, the affinity of Jews for liberalism is rather deep-seated. And yet, it is also a very curious affinity, for, as Alan Fisher has astutely pointed out in the *American Jewish Historical Quarterly* (December 1976): "What makes the liberalism of the Jews so unique is that almost all of the demographic characteristics of the Jews are associated with a more conservative stance. . . . Jews are, therefore, not only different, they are extremely different."

Theories purporting to explain Jewish liberal proclivities have not been lacking. The most common explanation is that Jewish liberalism derives from Judaism's powerful stress on social justice. This argument would be more convincing if the most observant Jews were not—as they frequently are—the most conservative politically, and if the most liberal Jews were not—as they frequently are—the least observant.

Other theories argue that Jewish liberalism derives from "status insecurity" and from feelings of "marginality." Were this so, one would expect third- and fourth-generation Jews, who are not at all insecure and who harbor no feelings of marginality, to be *less* liberal than their anxiety-ridden, marginal forebears. Alas, younger Jews are actually *more* liberal than their parents. So much for the predictive powers of sociology.

My own theory—which I advance very tentatively—is that Jews are liberals because the Jewish tradition, with its emphasis on scholarship and cerebration, inclines them to identify with intellectuals who, in the main, are decidedly liberal. (Why intellectuals are attracted to liberalism is a separate question, best left to another COMMENTARY symposium.) The only Jews who do not readily identify with intellectuals are the non-liberal Orthodox. To them, intellectuals are agents of secularization, to be shunned on those grounds alone. To non-Orthodox Jews, on the other hand, intellectuals represent reason, enlightenment, and the repudiation of anti-Semitic yahooism.

Of course, the fact that Jews have been consistent liberals in the past does not preclude the possibility that they may change their minds in the future. The likelihood of their doing so, however, is remote—and for several reasons. First, over a wide range of issues, Jews remain more liberal than other white Americans. To quote Fisher once again: "In attitudes toward integration, equal rights, welfare for the poor, and national health-care programs, Jews are more liberal than they were twenty years ago. On the most recent referents—marijuana, abortion, and pollution—differences with non-Jews are immense."

Second, when Jews are disappointed by liberals—as they were, most recently, during the Andrew Young affair—their typical response is not to become more conservative, but, rather, to become more *particularist*. For example, during the 60's the Reform movement, which tends to stress social activism, was heavily engaged in the civil-rights struggle. As blacks became more anti-Jewish, Reform Jews did not reconsider their liberal commitment. They did, however, become more involved in specifically Jewish activities. I would therefore expect that the Young affair will result in greater donations to the UJA this year, but I very much doubt that it will encourage defections from the Democratic party.

When it comes to voting behavior, the Jewish attitude to liberal candidates is really quite striking. Instead of asking, "Is so-and-so *good* for the Jews?" what Jews actually ask is, "Is so-and-so *bad* for the Jews?" As long as the answer is no, Jews will tend to vote for the liberal, even if the conservative candidate is *better* for the Jews. Thus, given a choice between a conservative candidate who opposes American recognition of the PLO under *any* circumstances, and a liberal who favors recognition of the PLO under *certain* circumstances, most American Jews, I expect, would vote for the liberal. Similarly, given a choice between a conservative who is "good" on quotas and a liberal who is "bad" on quotas but "good" on other things, most Jews would still prefer the liberal. To alienate the Jewish vote, a liberal candidate would have to be an overt anti-Semite. To win the Jewish vote, a conservative candidate, even if he were a philo-Semite, would have to be very, very lucky. The all too predictable upshot of this liberal "tilt" is that liberals take the Jewish vote for granted, while conservatives write it off from the start. As a Jew, I do not see this as a particularly desirable state of affairs. I hope Jewish voting patterns become more evenhanded—more "centrist," if you will—but I doubt that any such transformation will occur in the near future. My great fear is that unless Jews move closer to the Center of the American political spectrum, they will become increasingly isolated and vulnerable.

AS FAR as my own views on liberalism are concerned, I begin with a fundamental premise: the key political issue of our time is the struggle be-

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tween freedom and totalitarianism. I cannot see why support for the party of freedom necessarily makes one a conservative, but I have to admit that conservatives have been more alert than liberals to the Communist threat. Given a choice between a liberal candidate who is "dovish" on foreign affairs, and a conservative candidate who is "hawkish" on foreign affairs, most American Jews would probably vote for the liberal. I myself would vote for the conservative, even though on many domestic issues I am more sympathetic to the liberal viewpoint. It is, I believe, a question of priorities. I still consider myself a liberal, but my first priority, as a liberal and as an American Jew, is survival—the survival of America, the survival of Israel, the survival of freedom.

If I find myself out of step with the majority of American Jews, I am also out of step with the minority of "neoconservatives" who have decided, evidently, to quit the liberal fold altogether. In my opinion, they are committing a grave error. They are surrendering the word liberal to the enemies of liberalism. They seem not to realize that a great deal of political discourse revolves around symbols, and that the word liberal, despite its current debasement, remains a potent and valuable symbol, an emblem of decency and humanitarianism. I would argue that Jews like myself must hold on to the liberal appellation for two reasons: (1) we have a perfectly good claim on the word; (2) if we surrender it, our enemies will get it by default and use it against us. We should make it clear, however, that our liberalism has nothing in common with the ersatz radicalism and craven appeasement which passes for "liberalism" today.

As for the 1980 elections, I think Jews should not pay any attention to ideological or party labels in the forthcoming presidential race, nor should they be swayed by promises of support on issues of particular concern to them. (As Lenin said, "Promises are like pie crusts, made to be broken.") Rather, they should carefully scrutinize each candidate's key advisers, especially his foreign-policy and energy advisers. Instead of thinking of presidential candidates as human beings, with emotions, consciences, souls, and other human attributes, it might be useful to conceive of them as ambulatory computer terminals, each of which is hooked up to a given number of information systems ("advisers") which provide the computer with its inputs, thereby determining its output. In 1980, Jews should select the computer terminal most likely to provide a satisfactory printout. If this sounds excessively cynical, I am sorry. As our dear friend Zbigniew Brzezinski has informed us, ours is the "technetronic era." Besides, politics is a rough game.

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Edward Shils: The "interest" of Jews in America can be very variously defined. For those who are ambitious, equality of opportunity in every field of activity regardless of religious belief or affiliation or ethnic and religious ancestry is a desideratum. For those who wish to live according to the law, the freedom to do so without suffering any disabilities other than the inconvenience which this necessitates in a society in which they are a small minority is to their interest. For those who wish to divest themselves of their traditions and to be nonbelieving, nonobservant Americans of Jewish ancestry, the freedom to do that without having their ancestry held against them is to their interest. These "interests" of the Jews have existed ever since they came to the United States. Many of their civic activities have been formed about these interests, the satisfaction of which required the continuation and extension of the liberalism already widely practiced in many parts of the American society to which they came. Other contemporaneous immigrant groups had similar interests, but since they were not so ambitious as the Jews, they did not perceive these interests so urgently.

The American Jews thus had interests in common with all other Americans, which were to maintain and protect a liberal society. In this same sense they also had interests in common with blacks who were not recent immigrants and who wanted to have the same access to opportunities and rewards as persons of the prevailing type of pigmentation. For some reason, the Jews active in the main Jewish civic organizations became patrons of some of the main black organizations which were seeking to improve the civic and economic conditions of the black within an American society which they accepted in principle. The blacks, like the Jews and other recent immigrant ethnic groups, had an interest in being judged by those in authority in institutions in accordance with criteria which referred to their capacities and conduct and not to their pigmentation, or their present or ancestral religious beliefs, their recent territorial provenance, or the occupations of their ancestors.

The Jews' real interest, as Americans and as Jews, was above all to maintain American society as a liberal society of human beings as free as stability and orderliness allow, and to respect the traditions of national loyalty in which their fellow countrymen lived and which were essential to their society's liberalism. There were some points of conflict between their interests as Americans and their other interests as Jews. There were points of conflict with some of their fellow Americans, who were not as liberal as they were under obligation to be. There were also points of conflict because some of the Jews were not always as liberal in certain respects as the maintenance of American society required; they came to think that American society had to be fundamentally

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changed. They inclined toward the revision of liberalism in the direction in which a handful of American intellectuals, academics, and publicists, and a few politicians, were already trying to change it. As it has turned out, these changes were not changes in the direction of an extension of liberalism. Nonetheless, the proponents of these changes claimed to be liberals, although the program which they espoused came from a very different tradition, the tradition of adulation of the state, the tradition of *Kathedersozialismus*. This belief in the omnicompetent, omniprovident government has in the United States taken the form of collectivistic liberalism.

By and large, the first generation of American Jews of the great immigration which ran from the 1880's to the beginning of the second decade of the 20th century, jettisoned more of their own Jewish traditions than they needed to in order to gain what they desired in and from American society. In the difficulties under which they had to labor, as poor, uneducated, and newly arrived, they did quite well what they had to do. They were not political philosophers and they knew nothing about the doctrines of liberalism. Nonetheless, they became liberals. Some of them also slipped easily into collectivistic liberalism. Like other lower-class immigrants in the large cities, they became affiliated with the Democratic party. That was quite understandable and quite reasonable. The Jews fared well under the liberalism into which they had immigrated; the potentialities of the very different collectivistic liberalism seemed to be only reasonable extensions of the liberalism from which they benefited and they saw nothing of the dangers which it held for themselves and for American society. Therein hangs the tale.

THE conditions of work in the industries which they first entered and their sympathies for a progressivistic, moderately socialistic outlook drew some of them further than the then prevailing liberalism. This liberalism had many limitations but the Jews had an obligation to it as the prevalent belief of American society. American society received them and they flourished in it, certainly in comparison with the alternatives available to them in Europe. Up to the great depression of the 1930's, no harm and some good resulted from this slipping toward collectivistic liberalism for American society; the Jews lost nothing by it. American society was becoming a little more humane and its liberalism was extending its benefits to the Jews, although not without a certain amount of friction on both sides.

The Jews were also in internal conflict over the changes which they were experiencing in American society. They were renouncing the qualities and beliefs which they had developed as a "pariah people" and which had helped them to persist as a culture; they were also on their way to becoming members of a civil society which was rather different from the traditional Jewish society in which they had grown up. There was much pathos in this change. There were also two rather negative consequences: they went further in the renunciation of their own Jewish traditions than was necessary and they did not wholly assimilate the tradition of civility of the society into which they came. More specifically, many of the next generation of Jews of Eastern European parentage fell into a trough, losing much of their Jewish tradition and acquiring primarily that emergent variant of liberalism which laid stress on its distrust of authority and which at the same time expected benefits from the extension of governmental authority. They had the misfortune of coming of age in a period in which the older liberalism—the more genuinely liberal liberalism—was in discredit, and collectivistic liberalism was gaining in adherents. The liberalism of the Jews, like that of non-Jews, became a different thing from what it had been. This new kind of collectivistic liberalism, which has given liberalism a bad name and which causes traditional liberals to be misnamed as "neoconservatives," is something which the Jews should never have espoused.

I do not think that this collectivistic liberalism should be disavowed by Jews merely because a handful of blacks who claim to speak for the much larger numbers of blacks who are intended to be its beneficiaries are now acting in an extremely silly way, including in their silliness a certain amount of anti-Semitism, a spiteful sympathy with the terrorist PLO, and support for some of the worst elements in the Middle East against Israel. After all, that is what is to be expected from collectivistic liberalism, and from its reinforcement by the current of belief which led many to become fellow-travelers. This fellow-traveling outlook had attracted many Jewish intellectuals in the 1930's and 1940's and it still exists in a silent belief that Communist countries are almost always in the right and that capitalistic, more or less liberal societies are in the wrong. The Jews should renounce collectivistic liberalism and its alliances with the heirs of a dimly surviving fellow-traveling and a foolish emancipationist radicalism. They should do so not just because they should desist from offering their patronage to anti-Jewish activities and beliefs but because collectivistic liberalism and its allies are wrong and injurious to American society as well as to themselves.

The whole of American society is being severely damaged by collectivistic liberalism and the anarchic emancipationism which asserts that every impulse is sacred and that inhibition and self-restraint are tantamount to oppression. The policy of spending more than we produce, neglecting the maintenance and the renewal of our capital plant, the suspension of standards of competence and achievement in work in large organizations, the physical and moral aggravation of the public

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scene in the United States, and the support of iniquitous conduct by the invocation of the First Amendment are the products of collectivistic liberalism conjoined with emancipationism, which is now part of the collectivistic liberal program. Collectivistic liberalism is harmful to everyone except those who have lucrative posts in its administration and propagation; emancipationism is further disordering American society and confers benefits primarily on pornographers, vendors of drugs, and "civil-liberties" lawyers. It is not to anyone else's advantage, neither that of Jews nor that of blacks—witness the rotting away of a generation of young blacks, sustained and ruined in idleness by the self-righteously good intentions of collectivistic liberalism.

I think that Jews who are at present attached to it should cut themselves loose from this collectivistic liberalism. It is not to their interest as Jews, as Americans, or as Jewish Americans. Why should they take up a position which is ruining an imperfect but reasonably good society to which they owe so much? Why should they contribute to the ruination of American society, to the disadvantage of almost everyone in this society including in the long term blacks or Hispanics or any other ethnic minority which is being corrupted by collectivistic liberalism and deceived by the appointment of a small number of blacks or Hispanics to prominent positions?

MANY Jews in the United States have contributed to the growth of collectivistic liberalism. They have added their fervor to it; they have attached to it what remains to them of secularized fragments of the prophetic tradition. But it must also be said on their behalf that they did not create it.

Richard T. Ely was not a Jew. Simon Nelson Patten was not a Jew. John Dewey was not a Jew nor was Thorstein Veblen. (I enter the name of John Dewey here with many misgivings because John Dewey was a very good man and he was not muddleheaded either; yet it cannot be denied, despite the nobility of his character and despite the excellence of his influence on his great pupils, Sidney Hook and Ernest Nagel, that John Dewey's beliefs were important ingredients of the collectivistic liberalism which is now having such disastrous consequences for our country and the world.) In the time of the New Deal, Franklin Roosevelt, Thomas Corcoran, Henry Wallace, Rexford Tugwell, Harold Ickes, Hugh Johnson, and Harry Hopkins were not Jewish. Thurman Arnold, James Landis, Walton Hamilton, and the other gravediggers of the rule of law in the United States were not Jewish either. Jews, except for Benjamin Cohen, Felix Frankfurter, Jerome Frank, and a few others, were not in the front rank of the architects and executants of the New Deal.

I AM neither a believing nor an observant Jew, but I am very appreciative of my Jewish ancestry and I have a very lively sense of affinity with Jews, with *Ostjuden*, German Jews, Sephardic Jews, Ben-Israel Jews, even Cochin Jews, and I am devoted to the state of Israel partly because I have a strong feeling of kinship with its people and I regard its accomplishments in the formation of a decent society as no less admirable than those of the Swiss or the Danes or the Dutch and done under more difficult circumstances. The Jews of the Hellenistic age and of the Roman empire are very close to me. I have a visual image of my descent from these Jews of long ago.

I am pious in sentiment toward my ancestors and I am full of affection—often critical but strong—toward the generation of my parents, the poor pants-pressers, buttonhole-makers, shirtwaist-makers, cigar makers, small shopkeepers who worked so hard in a strange environment and who became patriotic Americans. I have great respect for the courage of these worthy, poor people. I have much less respect for their offspring who availed themselves of the prolific opportunities afforded by this society, discarded without regret their ancestral language, did not care to learn their history and at the same time retained the alienness of those ancestors from their society, disparaging it from the standpoint of an ideal of moral perfection which for them was embodied in the Soviet Union, one of the most disagreeable societies ever engendered by human vices. Collectivistic liberalism was made to order for this generation. Ingratitude and incivility are its attendants.

I HAVE often thought about liberalism but not as a Jew. I think that I have never thought of American public matters from the standpoint of "how will it help the Jews?" I have never participated in any Jewish organization, and I have never felt that I should "look at things as a Jew." I am sure that my having come from an immigrant Jewish family has affected my outlook but I have always wanted to think of that outlook, such as it is, as something *sui generis*, as an outlook which must stand or fall on its own merits. I have drawn more from Aristotle and Burke and Adam Smith and Max Weber than I have from any writer who has written "from a Jewish standpoint," except perhaps for Gershom Scholem.

Nonetheless, now that COMMENTARY has asked me to reflect on whether certain recent events "warrant a reconsideration by the Jewish community in general of its traditional commitment to liberalism," I take on myself the onus of expressing the hope that my fellow Jews in the United States will turn away from collectivistic liberalism and its parasitic emancipationism and will instead reaffirm that unsystematic and inconsistent amalgam of tradition and liberalism which prevailed for a long time in the history of this country.

At present our country is in a poor way. Not all

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of its difficulties are attributable to collectivistic liberalism, but some of the most striking are. There is no sign of relief on the horizon. The leadership of the Democratic party is heavily burdened with the stereotypes which have been formed over the past fifty years and the deficiencies of character of those who presume to lead it do not offer a good prospect for an improvement in the near future. Will the Jews turn away from it in the next presidential election? I doubt that this will happen to any great extent; collectivistic liberalism is too engraved in their hearts for many of them to do so. And even if it were less deeply engraved, where could they turn? To the Republican party, which is also pervaded by the same stereotypes, or which thinks of the illiberal glories of the 1920's, and whose self-presenting candidates for leadership offer little assurance or comfort?

I am not optimistic; but I am not without hope. Societies have a certain toughness and resiliency because traditions are tenacious. Our country is probably better beneath the surface of publicity than it appears in the words and actions of our political leaders, our publicists, and our social scientists. Maybe our educated Jews and the rest of the educated public will begin to become aware of this and more appreciative of that combination of tradition and liberalism into which the Jews and other immigrants from the 1880's onward came.

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David Sidorsky: The following comments, though not direct answers, are intended as responses to the four specific questions posed in the introductory statement.

1. MY CONCERN with the adequacy of the liberal vision of American society and the liberal agenda for the American future antedates the developments cited in framing the questions of the symposium. That concern is logically independent of any Jewish issues and interests, though it may have implications for communal policies. At the center of that concern is the belief that contemporary liberalism has upset the balance among the cluster of values that characterized the classical traditions of liberal thought and practice.

The liberal tradition, even though it was asserted in a revolutionary slogan like "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity," also comprehended—not only tacitly but in many explicit formulations—the values that are correlative with that slogan which can be phrased, rather unattractively, as "Order, Hierarchy, Otherness." Specifically, since "liberty" was championed as the elimination of arbitrary and irrational constraints, liberals also argued for the realization of the value of public "order," understood as the acceptance of reasonable constraints, or the "rule of law." Similarly, since "equality" was advanced as the elimination of discrimination based on irrelevant grounds such as race, religion, or sex, there was support for the "hierarchy" of natural liberty, that is, in favor of discrimination for such relevant reasons as superior accomplishment, demonstrated ability, or contractual obligation.

Finally, though "fraternity" was heralded as an ideal that affirmed the social or civic solidarity of all persons in a universal brotherhood, liberal society also recognized the importance of the plural associations which constituted "otherness," that is, the legitimacy of distinctions among fellow citizens that show that some brothers are more closely related than others. Although liberal theory or practice has been recurringly ambivalent on the place of ethnicity, religion, or nationality in the secular liberal state, it has not usually sought to erode these particularistic affiliations for the cause of universal fraternity.

It is a truism that any valid social philosophy must integrate competing and complementing values. Logical symmetry can readily indicate how conservative political thought must also confront the need for balancing these values, and how an unbalanced conservatism would have a skewed vision of order as authoritarian, hierarchy as based on inherited rank, and otherness as accentuating exclusions on grounds of race or religion. The decision, however, as Holmes's phrase goes, "is not one of logic but of experience." A critical reading of the recent record leads to the conclusion that American liberalism cannot now provide the necessary balance between liberty and order, equality and hierarchy, fraternity and otherness.

2. THE preceding conclusion warrants a reconsideration of a commitment to the contemporary forms of liberalism. In any event, it is noteworthy that liberalism, historically, has functioned as a successful critical or secondary force in the reform of various primary institutions: the family, the religious establishment, the traditional school, the army, and so on. It is only in the past generation that liberalism has increasingly become an independent primary source in the shaping of many contemporary institutions. That development, in itself, would call for some new assessment of its current record.

The reevaluation of liberalism, however, becomes critical, in my view, because of the inadequacy of liberalism in the area of international order or stability, an area that is fundamental for

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the survival of liberal institutions in the contemporary world. And, naturally, the Jewish community is not insulated from the considerations that generate the issue.

This inadequacy does not derive from the details of a liberal foreign policy but from a basic conceptual cleavage between the liberal and the traditional approach to social disorder. This cleavage is tacitly understood and easily explained, though not usually noted in explicit terms.

The traditional approach to social disorder is simply formulated. Every society is a group of persons bound together by normative laws or rules. In every society, since the members are human, there will unavoidably be some violators of the rules, for the diverse reasons and motives that characterize human nature. Hence, there is an inescapable place for authority, and an inevitable need for force and sanctions to maintain the rules, deter potential violators, and protect the society.

The liberal approach introduced a new framework of "causal" analysis of the phenomenon of social disorder, intended to complement and ultimately to replace the traditional "system-of-rules" approach. Basing itself upon the new social sciences after the Enlightenment, the liberal approach stressed that every social disorder has its causes. Since these causes are discoverable, the shift in conceptual framework also shifts the task of the social authority from that of maintaining the rules system against its violators to that of eliminating the causes of disorder, usually through reform of the social environment.

In international affairs, the liberal approach has focused on eliminating the supposed "causes" of war such as poverty, the profitability of arms manufacture, racism, the domestic denial of human rights, or even the psychological insecurity of new ruling elites, rather than on the traditional task of maintaining a system of international order with sufficient force to protect the member states of that system.

It is by reference to this shift of conceptual framework that it is possible to comprehend the rationality of those aspects of a liberal foreign policy that insist that the social reform of American institutions or those of its allies is the most appropriate way to deter potential aggression and maintain international stability. (Recall Andrew Young's diplomatic riposte to the Soviet violation of the Helsinki accords—for which his resignation was *not* requested—that there are political prisoners in the United States, and presumably they ought to be our first priority.) Only some such conceptual perspective makes it possible to understand the refusal of many liberals to think about topics like the strategies of deterrence, the punishment of aggressors, or the link between the viability of freedom and the defense of the boundaries of American military alliances.

The adoption of the liberal or causal approach has severe repercussions in the development of American foreign policy. In the present international situation, apart from the confusion and incoherence that result from the failure to integrate the two perspectives, the direct effect has been the weakening of support for allies who are potential victims of aggression and a consequent reduction of deterrence of aggression. This weakening of support is accompanied by an increased readiness to offer advice on the reform of the domestic policies and structures of individual states. This change of emphasis is most readily observable in the Carter administration's rift with Israel.

Much more generally and deleteriously, irresolution about the priority of international stability has been a major factor in several of the recent defeats American policy has suffered in African and Asian countries, including Ethiopia, South Yemen, Afghanistan, and Iran. These defeats have raised legitimate doubts about the ability of a liberal America to exercise the leadership that has preserved a structure of international peace since World War II.

3. I DO not believe that any significant reconsideration of liberalism will take place within the liberal community in the near future.

The major forums in which new, balanced, or integrative social perspectives could be generated are the universities and the media. These appear to me to be unlikely forums for any great debate over the adequacy of contemporary liberalism.

Without denying the important contribution that the universities make to our understanding of society and while supporting in the strongest possible terms freedom of inquiry, it still is plausible to argue that there are institutional tendencies in the universities and the media which lead to the preponderance of liberal sentiments and attitudes in both areas. There are several reasons for this.

The universities and the media, by the very nature of their interests in political and social affairs, tend to put a premium on their function as critics of established institutions. Accordingly, they tend to attract and to encourage persons who prefer and practice the skills of criticism rather than those who are more interested in understanding the conditions for the stabilization or growth of institutions. This ideological differentiation in the scope of talents was pointed out in the quip of the economist, F.A. von Hayek, that his bright liberal students became professors of economics while his bright conservative students went into banking or business.

There is, also, the influence of generational conditioning. Many of those who are currently assuming positions of cultural leadership have been brought up in a climate of opinion in which morally approved behavior derives heavily from the liberal side of the socio-political spectrum. Those who have protested so strongly American involvement abroad are not likely to become agi-

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tated over the credibility and stability of American alliances for the building of international order in the 1980's. A generation that has embraced environmental and anti-technological causes is not likely to become sympathetic to the need for adequate capital formation for investment in new technology and competitive productivity as economic priorities of the next decade.

It is true, of course, that new data as well as the fact of growing older generate a change of attitudes in areas of immediate experience. It may even be true that there is an immunization as well as a contagion factor in the prevalence of a single point of view. Yet, in large measure, the liberal trend of the new cultural elites has been set.

The staying power of liberal beliefs and attitudes, even when confronted with harshly realistic and seemingly contrary experience, can be tested by the current opinions of the American Jewish community. My non-statistical answer to the symposium question on present and future Jewish attitudes is that they continue to be reflexively liberal. This is a differential truth, of course, and it is more likely to be true of the more educated, expressive, and wealthy members of the group. Still, liberal views seem to me to be widely held, even though the reasons that this should be so—particularly in the light of the experiences itemized in the symposium statement and other encounters like the liberal reign in New York City—may be puzzling or indeterminable.

It is instructive to note the kind of explanation that has been offered to account for the continuing identification of many Jews with liberalism. One prominent historian has suggested that this closeness derives from the residual, latent strength of the Jewish religious heritage, including utopian moral prophecy. Another historian has argued that the Jewish community, having lost the anchor and the idiom of its religious tradition, is in quest of a new, messianic secular faith. A third explanation is that the Jews have suffered a trauma of ghettoization which motivates them to transcend ethnicity. In the context of social attitudes, the need to transcend ethnicity requires the overcoming of the commandments for group solidarity that characterized the moral viewpoint of the ghetto and their replacement by the seemingly universalist moral imperatives of liberalism.

The significance of these speculative efforts with their apparent invocation of a Jungian or Rankian collective unconscious does not lie in their truth. Rather, it is that each indicates that the Jewish attitude toward liberalism is not comparable to that of the individual who adopts a hypothesis which is to be confirmed or discarded in the light of the evidence. Each of the three suggests that an affinity for liberalism by Jews is part of their personal self-identification, and therefore cannot be abandoned when confronted by new events and circumstances.

4. In turning to the question on the implications of the Jewish community's attitude to liberalism for electoral politics in 1980, a different focus is required. Jewish political activity in elections has been much more centrist and pragmatic than Jewish political expression in literary and artistic circles would indicate. Thus, Jews in general were not clustered politically in the Henry Wallace-George McGovern axis to the same degree that Jews in cultural or media circles were. And several Jewish leaders, like the two recent Cabinet appointments, occupy centrist positions in the Democratic party.

It can be charged that this centrism is ineffective since the Carter administration's policies have become incoherent or even impotent because of the administration's vacillation between the two wings of the Democratic party. On the other hand, it may well be that the most practical political task of the Jewish community is to help sustain the Center of the Democratic party for the 1980's.

A good case can be made that for the past several decades, Jewish efforts within the Democratic party have been effective in generating appropriate responsiveness and concern for legitimate Jewish communal interests. So the continuation of these efforts should not be ruled out lightly, particularly from the perspective I have sketched, with its commitment to balance among competing ideological attitudes.

At the same time, the historical record shows, in sharp contrast to the rhetoric about the "radical Right," that the sixteen years of Republican government in the postwar period have been strongly marked by centrism. This is, perhaps, generally conceded for the post-1952 period, with the ending of the war against North Korea and China and of the influence of Senator McCarthy. It is also true of the post-1968 period, with new initiatives for American foreign policy with the Soviet Union, China, and Southeast Asia accompanied by the change of budget priorities at home and the cooling of racial turmoil in the inner cities. Of course, the new foreign-policy initiatives were nullified in the aftermath of President Nixon's resignation.

Yet it is not the historical record or the reality principle that is decisive, but the perception of reality. I do not believe that the Jewish community is convinced of the case for centrism within American society. In any event, it does not see in the Republican party a vehicle for centrist policies.

There is an interesting work of political fiction to be written by imagining what the impact of Jewish involvement—with the energy, commitment, and even zest that Jews bring to the political arena—would be on a centrist Republican effort in 1980. I do not believe that such a work of fiction can become fact.

My own fantasy, however, looks beyond the 1980 election to the ongoing task of achieving

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balance among the normative values of our polity. That balance—whether termed neoconservatism or reconstituted liberalism—could be achieved without the catalysis of catastrophe by 1984. That could do much to lay to rest the Orwellian fictional specter of *1984*.

DAVID SIDORSKY *is professor of philosophy at Columbia University and editor of* The Liberal Tradition in European Thought.

Seymour Siegel: Jewish interests and the liberal agenda have, in the past, had much in common. However, at present, we are faced with a different reality. Jews gained much because of liberalism. But the time has now come to part company as soon as possible and as cleanly as possible.

The current liberal agenda is opposed to Jewish *interests*. It is also at variance with Jewish *teachings*.

Jewish tradition is anti-utopian, stressing the sobering thought that though some problems are solvable, all of them are not. In historical time we do as much as we can, avoiding the delusion that we can bring about the ideal society. Liberalism sees all problems as solvable with good will and the correct tactics. Judaism is law-oriented, tradition-oriented, reverent of past usages. Liberalism celebrates the new and the novel. Judaism is not against change. It insists, however, that change be pursued with deliberation and with due regard for the organic character of a society. Liberalism looks for change which is all-encompassing in light of abstractions devoid of realism. Judaism insists on justice which is to be pursued justly without "respect for persons." Liberalism, at the moment at least, prefers to pursue justice with quotas and preferential treatment for favored minorities. Judaism tries to balance personal liberty with public order, teaching sexual restraint and the values of family and children. Liberalism favors permissive attitudes toward abortion, homosexuality, and unconventional family arrangements. Judaism favors an organic relationship between the religious traditions which undergird culture and the state. Liberalism opposes any governmental assistance to religious institutions, especially schools. Judaism is suspicious of the concentrations of power since man's nature tends to turn power into a vehicle for self-aggrandizement. Liberalism favors massive governmental intervention into the lives of individual citizens. Judaism requires that the community protect its own interests and its own integrity, for only in this way can it survive. Liberalism expects Jews—especially Jews—to yield their own interests for the sake of "progress" or "justice." Judaism, unlike some trends in Christianity, does not disdain business or commerce if they are pursued honestly and within the law. Economic liberty makes prosperity possible. Liberalism tends to be anti-business and anti-growth and favors strong regulation of the economy. Judaism requires group loyalties fostering group distinctiveness. Liberalism tends to espouse a universalism which views group cohesiveness as "tribalism." Judaism abhors the totalitarian state, whether of the Right or of the Left. Liberalism tends to tolerate tyrannical states, especially if they are identified as people's republics. Jews see the state of Israel and its security as indispensable to the Jewish future. The vast majority of Jews see the Palestinian terrorist organizations as a serious threat. Many liberals share this view. However, the most strident calls for reconsidering the current American policy toward the PLO come from the liberal camp.

There is diversity within liberalism as there are differing interpretations of Judaism. However, taken overall, it is correct to say that Jewish interests and values clash, at crucial points, with the agenda of American liberalism.

WILL American Jews act in the light of the perceived differences between Jewish views and those of American liberals? I am not sure. Segments of American Jewry have already reconsidered their political stance. Many of the intellectual leaders of neoconservatism are Jews, prominent among them the editors of and contributors to this journal. Yet, in spite of everything, the *majority* of Jewish voters do not abandon liberal candidates. It is safe to predict that a significant minority of Jewish voters will identify with the Republican party. A good deal depends on who the nominees will be. However, it is a fact that 1980 is a time of great opportunity for the Republican party. If it is effective, it can recruit many Jewish voters to its banner.

Having said this, I realize that the Jews are a stiff-necked people, but also an unpredictable people. Perhaps in 1980 Jewish unpredictability will overcome Jewish stiff-neckedness.

SEYMOUR SIEGEL *is professor of ethics and theology at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America.*

Henry Siegman: It is unlikely that the developments described by the editors of COMMENTARY will lead significant numbers of Jews to disengage from their traditional commitment to liberalism and from their support of the Democratic party. It is unlikely primarily because Jews have nowhere else to go.

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Yes, the enthusiasm of liberals for Israel is diminishing; their sympathy for the PLO is increasing; and, yes, they were noticeably indifferent to the black anti-Semitism that surfaced in the wake of Andrew Young's resignation. But do the editors of COMMENTARY seriously mean to suggest that the enthusiasm of conservatives for Israel is on the rise? Or that they are manning the barricades against the PLO? Have conservatives been outraged by black anti-Semitism?

When the COMMENTARY editors speak of the new unfriendliness of liberals to Israel, I suppose they have in mind people like George McGovern and Ramsey Clark. They assume that the unfriendliness of such liberals is indicative of the disaffection among liberals generally. The assumption is unwarranted. I submit that John Connally's views on Israel, as outlined in his recent pronouncement on the Middle East, reflect more accurately the conservative mood in America than McGovern's or Clark's criticisms of Israel bespeak the liberal mood. I continue to have far greater confidence in the friendship of "friendly" liberals —Walter Mondale, Frank Church, Birch Bayh, Edward Kennedy—than I do in the friendship of their "friendly" conservative counterparts.

If some liberals support quotas (most of them do not) I find their motives for taking this position—however misguided and even dangerous it may be—less threatening than what I suspect to be the motives of many conservatives who oppose quotas. Jews have more serious enemies than the sensibility that wishes to advance the well-being of disadvantaged minorities.

That our Jewish neoconservatives experience even minor disappointments with liberals as betrayal seems to me tacit acknowledgment of the higher expectations they continue to have of liberalism. And for good reason, for "in their hearts they know" that the principal antagonists of Israel and the Jews are still on the Right—the oil cartels, old-line Wasp conservatives, and neo-Nazi groups.

ADMITTEDLY, the reasons most Jews continue to feel more comfortable with liberals than they do with conservatives have little to do with the specifics of the liberal agenda. Some of these specifics do not serve Jewish interests, and others are disconcertingly ephemeral: yesterday's orthodoxies are today's heresies. Liberal attitudes toward America's international involvements, for example, have swung like a pendulum from interventionism to isolationism.

Nevertheless, a number of fundamental considerations have shaped the Jewish commitment to liberalism. Despite the recurrent anti-Semitism of the Left, it is the Right that has been in the past, and is likely to remain in the future, the more "natural" home of anti-Semites. We know *this in our guts, and the evidence of history* supports that visceral intelligence.

Another consideration is that the liberal agenda, despite its inconsistencies, sentimentality, and occasional cant, is seen as more closely approximating the politics of compassion and concern than does the conservative agenda. While there is no basis for the notion that Jewish tradition is intrinsically liberal (a far better case can be made that, in important respects, it is intrinsically conservative), there is no question that these qualities of compassion and concern resonate with an authentic Jewish sensibility. There is something decidedly *"goyish"* about a Darwinian marketplace in which only the fittest survive.

I seriously doubt that the advocacy of special-interest politics serves the interests of American Jews. The politics of "Is it good for the Jews?" is really not very good for the Jews. It may be good for Wasps, and it may even be good for blacks, but not for Jews. In a contest of interests, it does not take great political astuteness to perceive that Jews are likely to come out on the short end. We would be far better advised—on pragmatic grounds for those who find ethical ones embarrassing—to promote a political order in which principle and the larger good are also given moral weight.

To cite an obvious example, it is clear that the widespread support that the state of Israel continues to enjoy among Americans, even after one takes into account the attrition reported in recent polls, is not shaped solely by narrow self-interest. It is at least as much the result of an innate sense of decency to be found among average Americans, an instinctive sympathy for a small nation that shares our most fundamental values. I fear Israel would not fare very well in a political climate whose dominant sensibility is ethnic selfishness, nor would any other significant Jewish interest.

Another example is our concern for Soviet Jews. Corporate America, the backbone of conservatism (and the most consummate practitioner of the politics of self-interest), was at first an ally in our struggle against Soviet anti-Semitism; primarily, of course, because of its generic anti-Communism. But there is really nothing generic to self-interest —other than self-interest. So, when the Soviet Union offered a market for American products, corporate America became the preeminent advocate for the liberalization of trade with the Soviet Union and the adversary of the Soviet Jewry movement.

I DO NOT hold a brief for the politics of altruism. A universalism that leaves no room for discrete groups within society sooner or later turns into a tyranny, and, more often than not, Jews are its first victims. Furthermore, for too many Jews, the passion of universalist self-denial is in reality a passion for Jewish denial, an opportunity to escape from their Jewishness into an undifferentiated secular eschaton. I am highly skeptical of universalists who love humanity but are incapable of loving *tatteh* and *mammeh*.

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But there *is* warrant in Jewish tradition for the notion that there is a larger public interest that has a claim on our conscience. Yes, we will contend with other groups to advance our own interests. That is why the organization I am associated with was in the forefront of the struggle to preserve those features of our electoral system which enable minorities to pursue those interests.

But both Jewish ethics and the liberal sensibility understand that we are far too implicated in each other's fate to seek the unconditional surrender of those who for the moment are our adversaries. The insistence that self-interest can never be calculated so narrowly as to leave no room for the claims of others is precisely where Judaism and liberalism meet.

If I have no sympathy for those who engage in the politics of universalist self-denial, it is not primarily because they are not *for* Jews, but because they are not Jews. For the most part, their predominant impulse is not altruism, but a compulsion to escape their Jewishness. I agree with much of the neoconservative critique of that aspect of the liberal sensibility that is hostile to particularism. My problem with the neoconservatives is that their emphasis remains as misplaced as that of the old universalists. It is on being for ourselves rather than being ourselves. It is the difference between making it better for Jews, and making better Jews. Like it or not, a significant part of being ourselves has something to do with not being only for ourselves.

HENRY SIEGMAN *is executive director of the American Jewish Congress.*

Roger Starr: Jews and liberalism—the linkage between the two is full of irony. Which aspect of liberalism does one mean? Liberalism as the defense of human rights against a restrictive government was certainly taken by Jews to coincide with their interests when governments restricted Jewish opportunity. Liberalism as faith that there is enough for all, and that the economic problems of the world are those of distribution only—a palatable proposition when Jews were poor, and still palatable when the particular interests of specific Jews would be helped by redistribution. Liberalism that, in its attachment to redistribution appears in the populist guise, turning the back of its hand to groups that do not qualify as part of a homogeneous body politic: no room for Jews there. Liberalism, in its current aspect, determined to impose equality of distribution and to oppose the spending of government money on such non-distributable goods as the national defense—here it seems to me Jews are of mixed feeling; they are suspicious but remarkably tolerant.

It should be clear to all by now that in its egalitarian phase, which has come to mean not legal but economic equality, liberalism offers no sanctuary for Jews. The "goal" system, currently a euphemism for quotas, does not apply to professional basketball players, although they make more money, per capita, than doctors do. Clearly the liberals see nothing wrong in applying a numerical target to those professions in which Jews have demonstrated aptitude—medicine, the law, the sciences. Yet there is no great national outcry directed similarly against high-level executive exclusionary practices in the major corporations.

Nor, if Jews connect Israel with American security, does it seem natural for them to sit quietly by while European Socialist parties flirt with the PLO. European Socialists can excuse their shift by pointing out that most Palestinian Arabs are poorer than the Rothschilds, but that seems hardly to be the basis of their turn against Israel. They are worried about what lack of oil may do to their economies and the living standards of their members; and it must be said that many American Jews, worried about the same things, appear quite unperturbed by the change in European socialism.

Indeed, perhaps the most startling consequence of the liberal shift is the equanimity with which most Jews have accepted it—at least in national and international affairs. Jews will, of course, oppose candidates who outspokenly identify Israel with the oil shortage or flirt indiscreetly with the PLO, but while a large number complain that Begin does a poorer job of public relations than Sadat, the majority searches for a formulation that will convincingly set forth adherence to Israel as an *American* objective. American Jews would, of course, arise again in anger at a new Lindbergh who would say that Jews are responsible for Arab and Iranian hostility, but it seems unlikely that they would vote solidly against a candidate who merely suggests he would take a fresh, new look at the Middle East in the search for peace. Most Jews, after all, opposed the war in Vietnam and do not wish to lose their children in another one. But by the time all the connections are made, it will be too late (as it was too late when American Jews finally learned, or were willing to learn, about genocide, that much-abused term).

THERE are, of course, American Jews who are losing their faith in the liberal tenets. They sense that there really may not be enough to go around; that egalitarian distribution policies may interfere with production, leaving less, not more, for all; and that production is not to be taken for granted. But these are not specifically Jewish concerns. The political arena in which Jews are, as Jews, moving away from their past adherence to liberalism is the local scene. Other European

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ethnics no longer seem so frightening as they did fifty years ago, and even sexual liberation and abortion have less charm than they did when they were merely talked about. On the national scene, conservatives are still somewhat unsettling to Jews who remember (from books) Dreyfus, the Czar's pogroms, the Rumanian reaction. On the local scene, conservatives are now the policeman who looks better than ever, and the storekeeper who is as frightened as you are of street violence and subway mugging.

In New York, fearful Jews have the luxury of a Democratic mayor who is both Jewish and clearly anti-liberal on everything but rent control. Even some wealthier Jews—able to achieve a safe social distance that is denied to their poorer co-religionists—are beginning to side with Mayor Koch's tough words on street crime and to reject their former belief that violence can be avoided by greater generosity and gentler courtroom treatment. But the distance between rejecting liberal tenets in the local police station and rejecting them in the White House is a long one.

ROGER STARR *is a member of the Editorial Board of the New York* Times.

Marie Syrkin: Implicit in the symposium statement is the assumption that liberalism is to be defined not by what had been the traditional liberal agenda but by present deviations from it. I first wish to register an objection to the usurpation of "liberal" to describe positions I consider fundamentally illiberal. This is not semantic nit-picking. Misappropriation of language is an assault on ideas via vocabulary. (The capture of the lovely word "gay" by homosexuals is a case in point, since, by inference, heterosexuals presumably qualify as "glums.") If in the past I shared with fellow liberals the conviction that racial or religious quotas in education or employment were discriminatory (remember the liberal outrage at Jewish quotas in Harvard), that civil-service examinations protected merit from prejudice, and that violence was not by definition revolutionary, I see no reason for surrendering the term "liberal" to those who have abandoned what used to be the axioms of the democratic-liberal consensus. In the United States, liberal, a value-laden word with a rich freight of virtues from individual generosity to social progress, denotes not a political party but an intellectual category. Who wants to be stigmatized as illiberal? For this reason many Jews have found it easier to accept an arbitrary switch of direction rather than to be excommunicated from the liberal fold.

With this caveat, that I view liberalism as having been betrayed by neoliberals who still call the tune but have changed the text, I admit to disenchantment with the current revision of the liberal program. I am concerned with the desertion of concepts and objectives hard-won and dearly-held not too long ago. Perhaps the vantage point from which I watched this process of erosion is worth mentioning.

As a child I lived in New York on Charlotte Street when the neighborhood was a community of poor European immigrants. I graduated from nearby Morris High School. Later I taught in a Manhattan high school with a working-class, largely white, student body. In the intervening years all three places have achieved considerable notoriety as symbols of segregation with its attendant ills. Yet I can imagine nothing that would have more deeply outraged the authentic liberal conscience of my peers than the introduction of Southern-style legislation to control the mobility of any sector of the population. The demographic transformation of the city bore witness to the freedom of movement of its citizens. That this freedom extended to those who moved away as well as to those who moved in did not alter the crucial right to mobility even if it resulted in the residential concentration of blacks, Hispanics, Italians, or Jews.

Those who pretend that *de facto* is merely a cosmetic variant of *de jure* segregation should ask themselves what would have been the complexion of great Northern urban centers if New York, Chicago, or Detroit had been restricted by *de jure* segregation. Yet the glibly parrotted identification of *de facto* and *de jure* is at the heart of the inflammatory issue of forced busing—the issue now touted to measure the degree of liberal commitment. Because Jews were in the forefront of the struggle against legal segregation they are now on the defensive when, like the majority of whites, they oppose mandatory busing of their children to admittedly inferior schools or to remote neighborhoods. They need not be apologetic; they had enlisted in a different battle. No Northern liberal had to be convinced of the indecency of "Whites Only" barriers in public schools, parks, or streetcars. Such violation of human and civil rights was intolerable. But the significant right won was free access to an institution or facility, not to the person of a fellow student or passenger. Let me use an extreme example. In a free society no one can be compelled to go to Central Park or use the subway, but by the same token no one can be barred from doing these things for reasons of race. Both rights are precious. The parent who fought for the open school door is not a hypocrite if he subsequently objects to the mandatory shifting of pupils regardless of the educational benefits to be achieved.

Those clinging to the liberal label have been obliged to make swift somersaults in the positions

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they assumed. In the 60's black spokesmen in New York charged Jewish teachers with the "cultural genocide" of their black pupils. In the ensuing uproar blacks raised the cry of community control of the schools and demanded the exclusion of white, in particular Jewish, teachers. The test of liberalism then was support of this divisive clamor. Today the reverse—the mandatory transfer of teachers and pupils—has become the sign of grace. These capricious and at the same time dogmatic shifts are uncritically upheld. Objective attempts to assay either the pedagogic or social effectiveness of the proposals are condemned as reactionary or bigoted. Note the obloquy to which James Coleman of the famous report on the equality of educational opportunity has been subjected because on the basis of experience he now questions the wisdom of busing as an educational or social tool.

The same arbitrary twists that have bedeviled a rational approach to urgent social problems have marked neoliberal attitudes in foreign affairs. The reversal of roles by which PLO terrorists have emerged as the martyred "Jews of the Middle East" and Israelis as the Nazi oppressors has become a popular act on the international scene. From a Castro who in the presence of blood-stained Cambodian and Vietnamese representatives unblinkingly described Zionism as the greatest "crime of our era" to the lachrymose, humanitarian I.F. Stone, leftists have maneuvered this transformation. Liberals accept this ongoing revision of history partly out of plain ignorance and also out of instant enthusiasm for any "liberation" slogan, provided it is not Jewish.

WHERE does the conclusion that the current crop of pseudo-liberals is not the genuine article get me and the Jewish community? Should Jews therefore renounce their traditional commitment to liberalism? Yes, if such commitment means automatic approval of quotas, extenuation of black anti-Semitism, and indifference to the fate of Israel. Renunciation of this program would not indicate a lessening of idealism. I reject the gross and stupid charge that in their social zeal Jews were motivated primarily by self-interest. The same sense of justice that brought Jews to the vanguard of social activism in the past animates their present protest against a resurrected system of *de jure* discrimination through the imposition of quotas on the one hand, and the flouting of legal safeguards for equal opportunity on the other by making meritocracy a dirty word. As for Israel, the ethical case for Jewish national independence has not been weakened by the barrage from assorted Communist, Arab, and Third World tyrannies. If this means parting company from neoliberals of the fashionable stripe, the valedictory must be made. But I do not renounce my faith in democratic socialism because Bruno Kreisky or Willy Brandt have cozied up to the PLO, nor do I give up my dedication to racial equality because of Jesse Jackson.

The 1980 presidential election obviously presents a serious question mark. Salvation does not rest in the Republican fold any more readily than in the Democratic one. The demerits of various candidates in regard to the several issues considered are apparent. My personal preference would be for the tough-minded, courageous idealism of a figure like Daniel P. Moynihan. I suppose this is a utopian hope.

MARIE SYRKIN, *professor emeritus of Brandeis and a former editor of the Herzl Press, has written extensively on education and Jewish affairs. Her most recent book is* Golda Meir: A Biography.

Michael Walzer: If we think of the Jews, as these questions plainly invite us to do, as an American interest group, one among the others, better off than these, less secure and powerful than those, then it follows that our politics will sometimes be liberal, sometimes illiberal. What policies we support will depend on circumstance and on how the calculations of interest work out. Before we know what constitutes the greatest good of the greatest number of Jews, we will have to do the arithmetic. I suspect that the figures will lead us to support liberal programs more often than not—just as they have done in the past. Jewish interests are still served by a politics which aims at a stronger and more generous welfare state and by a serious social effort to deal with, not just to repress, racial hostility and to open new opportunities for minorities generally and for women. (This is true even in the most narrow sense: Jewish women have probably been among the first beneficiaries of affirmative-action programs.)

But the interest-group model, though it seems to legitimize ethnic self-assertion, is in fact assimilationist in its long-term meaning, and we ought, I think, to be wary of it. Perhaps other ethnic and religious groups should be wary of it too, but I won't presume to speak for them. Surely, it is not an attractive picture of American Jews, or of other Americans, which has us counting only Jewish heads while they are counting only Italian heads, black heads, and so on. We have to count, certainly, but that's not the whole of our politics. We are not only an interest group; we are also a historic community. We don't only have interests; we also have values, a culture, patterns of social action generated out of our collective experience; we even have commandments. Or, to make the same argument in different terms: one of our interests is the survival of our com-

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munity as a community of a certain sort, with its distinctive religious and secular culture.

Now, that culture is, in many of its largest aspects, a culture of the Left. Not this or that Left, Marxist, social democrat, New Leftist, or even liberal, but of the Left in the most general sense. Some of us were raised on that identification, but I think it is more widely understood. Our ethos is leftist: because we remember that we were slaves in Egypt, because we remember the ghetto, the years of persecution, the pariah years. And our mores and daily behavior are leftist: in the Jewish community rates of participation and levels of argument approach what they might be in a socialist society. We may not be a nation of priests and a holy people, but we are a nation of activists, organizers, and committee workers. We have learned, many of us, to part with our money in the name of justice. We have learned the importance of solidarity. And all this is reflected not only in our lives as Jews but also in our lives as Americans. Perhaps that's why even the Orthodox community, always and by definition conservative, continually produces (these days along with fervent supporters of Gush Emunim) young men and women with social consciences and radical ideas. It is a simple fact of our experience that, when we look at the world from our corner, radical ideas come naturally.

PERHAPS all this will change; perhaps one day we will learn to be for ourselves and only for ourselves, like the rational maximizers of contemporary social science. But then, we will be Jews in name only; we might as well call ourselves Ruritanians. And I don't think I will care very much, though it may still be an important question for the pollsters, how the Ruritanians vote in the next presidential election.

MICHAEL WALZER *is professor of government at Harvard and editor of* Dissent. *He is the author of* Just and Unjust Wars *and* Obligations: Essays on Disobedience, War, and Citizenship.

Julius Weinberg: Political scientists, for some time now, have identified a phenomenon known as a "critical" election—a major turning point in the voting behavior of the nation, one that is profound and pervasive enough to shift political alignments for many decades to come. Two such elections, which led to the dissolution of the Whig party, occurred in 1852 and 1856; the election of 1896, which led to the dominance by the Republican party of our national politics for more than three decades, was another; and the election of 1932, the year that marked the return of the Democrats to a position of political superiority—a coalition put together by Franklin D. Roosevelt—was yet a fourth. While political candidates and parties—and voters—often describe current election campaigns as critical for the future of the country, this is usually more rhetoric than reality. Much of our political behavior turns out to be fairly predictable—a continuation of past political preferences and behavior by both the voters and those whom they vote into office.

Given the breakdown of the post-World War II consensus that has taken place in the past decade —more evident in the Democratic party than among the Republicans—it may very well be that we are on our way as a nation to another critical election at some point soon, one that will produce a major realignment in the composition or programs of our political parties. As late as 1968, the New Deal coalition FDR had put together almost succeeded in placing Hubert Humphrey in the White House, though he was defeated by the new liberals who, in their masochistic wisdom, preferred the election of their arch-enemy, Richard M. Nixon, to that of their former liberal friend. That same coalition, however, enabled Jimmy Carter, a political nonentity, to squeak by Gerald Ford, despite the latter's creditable record on inflation and other issues on which his successor has failed. But it is not at all certain that this continued domination of our political system by the Democrats—an increasingly unlikely alliance of Southern and Northern whites, farmers and workers, ethnics, blacks, Catholics, and Jews —will continue for much longer. The reasons for the break-up of this coalition which has lasted almost half a century stem from new developments and issues—both domestic and international—that will alter and reshape the political battleground.

THROUGHOUT the 1970's, many in the Jewish community have been warily—and, by now, wearily—watching the maturation of the new liberalism and the contributions of this socio-political phenomenon to the erosion of American preeminence in international affairs, to a no-growth economy, and to the assault, through a combination of judicial activism and administrative fiat, on the meritocratic norms through which Jews and other descendants of the new immigration made their way into the middle- and upper-middle class in the postwar era. For many, the supreme irony of the Carter Presidency lies in the influence—and sheer administrative power—this ideologically sterile administration has given to the McGovernite exponents of the new liberalism, a social philosophy so resoundingly rejected by the nation in the Nixon-McGovern contest of 1972. Given its performance to date, a growing segment within the Jewish community has concluded that the amalgam of para-populism, political opportunism, and new liberalism that has characterized the Carter administration will be of little help in leading the nation to solutions for the many

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maladies that currently beset us. In increasing numbers, American Jews have come to feel that Jimmy Carter lacks the leadership qualities or the programs that can rouse the nation from its post-Vietnam defeatism, to overcome the pernicious impact of OPEC and home-grown enemies on our economy, or to curb the variety of socio-cultural spin-offs that have been left as a national legacy from the civil-rights, counterculture, and New Left movements of the last decade. At this point, larger numbers of American Jews—card-carrying Democrats since the 1930's—have come to the conclusion that the liberalism of the Carter administration—if it, indeed, deserves to be called liberal—is as much a part of our current malaise as an instrument for its alleviation.

More recent events have done little to allay these fears. The American Jew is becoming increasingly worried over the political scapegoat role into which the Jews, and the state of Israel, have been cast (not an unfamiliar one in the Jews' two-millennia existence in the Diaspora) by an inept administration seeking to explain away its personnel and policy failures, by John Connally speaking for a segment of the business establishment, and by Andrew Young and Jesse Jackson, spokesmen for an aggrieved proletariat seeking to make its way into that establishment. While only members of the Jewish Defense League, listening to and watching these self-serving politicians, will conjure up visions of 19th-century pogroms or a 20th-century Holocaust, other Jews, more secure and serene in outlook, have started searching for political options, responding to what they perceive to be an increasing vulnerability on the part of the Jew to the rising tensions of the contemporary American scene.

While there are still many who will stay in the liberal fold—those keeping alive the vestiges of Jewish radicalism that have appeared, and reappeared, in a variety of guises in three generations of East European Jews; those who still find it necessary to emulate the liberal rhetoric of the well-established, conscience-striken, native Anglo-Saxon; or those Jews who cannot tear themselves away from the liberal agenda, out of generational inertia or personal nostalgia—their numbers will tend to diminish in the 80's.

Currently, there are three segments of the Jewish community that are in the process of rethinking their liberal commitments. The first group consists of second- and third-generation Jews who have made their way into the upper echelons of the business and professional world. As they become more and more acculturated, these upwardly-mobile Jews will start voting their pocketbook, not their sentiments. Those who have arrived and find it possible—as did their German Jewish predecessors—to vote conservative and fulfill their humanitarian impulses through private instrumentalities rather than through the beneficence of the welfare state, will be joined in the conservative ranks by two other groups in the Jewish community: those who have not yet arrived, for whom affirmative action is an obstacle to be overcome rather than a self-inflicted wound to be enjoyed, and the "single-issue" Jewish voter, those for whom the security of the state of Israel—inherently and as the acid-test of the effectiveness and honor of American foreign policy—is of paramount concern.

AT THIS point the nation is clearly in a state of both flux and inertia; the consensus of the 50's and early 60's has broken down and no new commonality of interests and ideology has emerged. Few Americans, if we are to believe the pollsters, are impressed with those who hold political office, nor do they expect much from their political parties and their programs. A parallel can be drawn between our current situation and the 1920's, the decade that preceded the last "critical" election and, like the 70's, was characterized by political sterility, social innovation and conflict, and a booming—yet flawed—economy. Moreover, there is the growing conviction in the country that our problems—our inability to influence events abroad, the energy crisis, and the mindlessness of something as close to home as our public schools—cannot be charted, or solved, on the current liberal/conservative continuum. It is evident that many in the Jewish community—and outside it—are coming to see that the old liberalism, that of the 30's and the immediate postwar era, has exhausted its potential, and that the new liberalism never had one to offer.

Given the current paucity of ideas and programs that can capture the imagination of the electorate, Jews, like many others, will become voters in flux, focusing on the candidate rather than what they conceive to be rather nebulous—and impossible-to-carry-out—political programs. If they had the choice, many American Jews would put Daniel P. Moynihan in the White House, hoping that the United States could be taken back to an era when Russian arms in Cuba were removed by presidential action, not cosmetized, and when we helped, rather than cringed before, the Third World. Jews fear the nomination or election of John Connally, or a campaign in which the candidates vie with one another as to what they can extract *from* Israel rather than, as in the past, what they will do *for* Israel. The gut feeling in the Jewish community is that, apart from these two extremes, there is not much to choose from, that until another critical election, when a major political realignment takes place—and new programs and coalitions are formed—our current concerns will be neither solved nor dissolved.

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Leon Wieseltier: The Jewish alliance with liberalism is owed not to the prophets, or to some immense national talent for morality, but to a tough-minded perception of Jewish self-interest: 19th-century Jews in Western Europe determined that equal rights and civil liberties were what they needed most, and so they hewed to the liberal vision of the middle classes. The decision about the future of this inherited relationship with liberalism must also be made in the name of Jewish interests. COMMENTARY acknowledges this, and wonders whether the alliance should not be dissolved, because Jewish interests appear to have been banished from "the standard liberal agenda."

There is no doubt that certain prominent liberal circles, and the left wing of the Democratic party, and significant elements in the black community have turned all against Israel, and kindled to the lie that Zionism is colonialism. There is also no doubt that these new enemies cannot be entirely explained by the Israeli government's indefensible policies on the West Bank; some of them are moral opportunists who have been running on empty since the Americans left Saigon, and some are just anti-Semites in pro-Palestinian drag. The black eruption last summer was particularly ugly. There was the gutter anti-Semitism of Jesse Jackson and the café anti-Semitism of James Baldwin; the Jews in Israel were to be punished for *Bakke*, and the PLO rewarded for the unexpected rousing of the civil-rights movement from its torpor; and Andrew Young announced that it is only "natural" that unemployed blacks would favor the Palestinians, as if the price of oil would drop a nickel were a Palestinian state declared tomorrow.

All this is true, and troubling, but it is hardly the whole story. Before the alliance with liberalism is ended Jews must examine what allies remain for them elsewhere in America. And such an examination will show that the peril to Israel from the inner cities and the Institute for Policy Studies is not nearly so great as the peril from the oil companies, the multinational corporations, and critical sectors of the financial community. David Dellinger is not the threat that John Connally is. There may have been a "paucity of liberal protest against the anti-Semitism that surfaced in the wake of Andrew Young's resignation," but neither were conservatives in paroxysms of indignation; and there was widespread anti-Semitism prior to the Young affair, and precisely in those precincts of American society most hostile to liberalism. American Jews, properly incensed by the betrayal of traditional friends, should not blind themselves to the grim fact that a more formidable foe awaits them elsewhere, a foe located in centers of power upon which Jews have almost no influence. There is something grotesque about the spectacle of Jewish intellectuals putting out briefs for corporate cupidity; I wonder how effective these Jews will be when they appear in the boardrooms to argue against the view that American policy in the Middle East should be designed solely to keep the oil flowing, if indeed they come to argue against that at all.

There is more. Nothing is so urgently in the interests of Israel as that the United States at last devise an energy program. Only that will make the Arab pressure manageable. Like most of the citizenry I do not know enough to evaluate the merits of the alternative energy sources that have been put forward, but there is a political fact about the energy debate that seems clear enough, and it is that the patriots calling for growth and more growth are exactly those who are least disturbed by America's dependence upon imported oil (for which the United States paid $4.8 billion in September). Again, the danger is not so much the environmentalists, spineless though they often seem, as it is their opponents. Nor is nuclear power the way out of this Jewish dilemma. If its advocates are right, it will still provide for only a small portion of America's energy needs. And if its advocates are wrong, Israel's fortunes must not be allowed to rest, even in part, upon the possibility of that kind of carnage. Zionism is not that sort of nationalism.

It is said—most often by liberalism's apostates—that Jewish interests lie in a strong America, and in a weak Soviet Union. That is indisputable. But such an attitude must be translated into politics responsibly. For example: the ideological passion with which American Jewish spokesmen make the cold-war argument for Israel (that it is an indispensable asset for the United States in its strategic contest with the Russians, which it is) and against a Palestinian state (that it would be a Soviet satellite, which it probably would not) often has the effect of deflecting the attention of Jews away from the mounting dangers to Israel posed by the continued occupation of the West Bank. I am not implying that a solution to the Palestinian problem is worth an increase in Soviet strength; resistance to the Soviet Union, to its values and its adventures remains the test of moral and political mettle, particularly for liberals. But I am suggesting that Soviet support for the PLO (which for the PLO, as for the Syrians, is primarily tactical) is no excuse for tabling the need for Israel to offer something meaningful to those million Palestinians who will not go away. A solution can be found that will satisfy the inhabitants of the West Bank and keep the Russians out. It is surely the case that almost no peace would be ground so fertile for Soviet intrigue as the present impasse.

CALCULATIONS of the Jewish interest depend, finally, on one's view of what makes America strong, and of the real position of the Jews in the United States. Concerning the former: there are different prescriptions for what makes America strong, and these are not instructively described as "liberal" and "conservative." I have reservations about

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COMMENTARY's use of the term "liberalism"; it denotes a package of attitudes that does not quite exist, it synchronizes political beliefs in a manner that does no justice to the unsimple character of the political world. One may be for Bakke and against Begin, for gay rights and against SALT II.

Concerning the position of the Jews in the United States: they should not confuse comfort with muscle. American Jews will never be powerful enough here to go it alone, to prosecute their interests without the cooperation of other groups. They require coalition politics. And their most appropriate partners for coalition, the actors for whom the Jews will always be least expendable, are the conventional liberal constituencies, for the simple reason that alone they too cannot help themselves. The black community will remain a more or less reliable ally, because—unlike the banks and the corporations and the military and the civil service and the foundations—it needs the Jews. No doubt many blacks resent that, but there are major figures among them who recognize that the belligerency must end, that the two cannot afford to write each other off.

Jews must stand firm against their adversaries on the Left, and they must express without apologies, and in political action, their anger at those liberal forces which have disappointed. But if the Jews depart the liberal camp entirely I do not see that they have anywhere to go. Perhaps that is because I take a dimmer view than COMMENTARY of the Jewish dispensation in America. No country on earth has been better to the Jews than the United States; but it is not our country.

LEON WIESELTIER *is a member of the Society of Fellows at Harvard University.*

Ellen Willis: I come at the question of Jewish liberalism from a radical perspective. Jews' commitment to liberalism has, it seems to me, been bound up with the illusory hope that America is different, that the question of Jewish survival cannot arise here. Since Jews have traditionally been caught in the middle of power struggles between rulers and oppressed classes, it is no wonder that liberalism has looked so attractive: it suggests that class is no longer an issue, or at least that open conflict can be averted through fidelity to the "standard liberal agenda." In the short run, liberalism has worked well for Jews, allowing us to thrive as never before and defusing political anti-Semitism of both the Right and the Left. But the Jewish liberal strategy is now coming up against the essential fallacy of liberalism—that it can resolve rather than merely postpone class conflict. Commitment to liberalism as a solution implicitly depended on the premise that American hegemony in the world (which insured domestic prosperity and growth) was both benign and permanent. In my view, American power has been far from benign, but one need not share that view to recognize that no empire is permanent. Since the Vietnam war, the erosion of American power has intensified class conflict abroad, producing a wave of political reaction at home. The rising tension between Jewish and non-Jewish liberals reflects the decline of liberalism itself as a plausible middle ground.

The issue of affirmative action is a good example. It arose in the first place because traditional liberal remedies for discrimination were not working, and has become a symbol of black frustration in a conservative era. While Jews' fear of quotas is legitimate, Jewish organizations have used that fear to justify a hard-line anti-egalitarian position: they rule out economic equality as a desirable goal, assume objective testing to be the best or only measure of merit, and suggest that Jews should support the present system because we have done so well under it. The first two points I simply disagree with; the third goes beyond worry that affirmative-action programs will lead to restrictive quotas and endorses an I'm-all-right-Jack brand of protectionism. Though liberals have undoubtedy been insensitive to Jewish uneasiness about quotas, it is misleading to define the issue in those terms. The fact is that a sizable group of Jews now identifies Jewish interests with an essentially conservative stance, which automatically puts them in conflict with the Left. Though I oppose this stance on wider moral and political grounds, I also think it is shortsighted and dangerous. It defies a basic lesson of Jewish history: insofar as we ally with any establishment, we set ourselves up as scapegoats.

As the perennial split between left-wing and "centrist" liberals has widened, the liberal Left has become more receptive to the anti-Jewish, anti-Israel biases that surfaced on the radical Left years ago. But this phenomenon has a larger context. Anti-Semitism is pervasive in this culture; it transcends the conventional Left-Right spectrum. In recent years, since Israel's victory in 1967, the upward mobility of American Jews, and the rise of Jewish neoconservatism have provided a rationale for attacking us as symbols of established power, open hostility toward Jews has come mostly from the Left. Yet the growing power of the Right is a far worse threat. Liberals may help to legitimize anti-Semitic attitudes, but it is an increasingly conservative government that has the power to exploit those attitudes and, in classic fashion, use the Jews to divert attention from its oppressive economic policies. The administration's unwillingness to curb unemployment, prices, or profits, its subservience to the oil industry, and the crackdown on spending for social services have produced widespread discontent that has already

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begun to focus on Jews. It is not surprising that the most explicit attack has come from the group that has suffered most from the current reactionary offensive. More significant, to my mind, is that Jimmy Carter not only made no effort to reduce black-Jewish tension but actively encouraged it by giving Jesse Jackson's Middle East trip semi-official status. While Jews and blacks fight, the administration moves toward rapprochement with the PLO and decontrol of oil prices. One can infer that Carter is not averse to having people blame Israel, Jewish support of Israel, and "Jewish power" for our economic troubles. If his actions do not suffice, John Connally's recent remarks should be fair warning to any Jew who imagines that Israel has friends on the Right. And if liberals have been slow to defend us against anti-Semitic attacks, I haven't noticed conservatives leaping to the barricades either.

WHAT we are witnessing, I believe, is an end to American Jews' thirty-year vacation from serious personal concern with the Jewish question. It is not just liberalism that warrants reconsideration but our overall situation as Jews. We need to begin making a radical analysis of anti-Semitism—radical in the sense of addressing root causes—rather than simply react to immediate political events. Since anti-Semitism has always been an outlet for people's rage at their oppressors, the traditional Jewish concern for social justice has a strong practical as well as ethical basis; for Jews, conservatism, whatever its immediate benefits, can only be a trap. On the other hand, conventional leftist economic analysis has not only failed to comprehend the nature of Jewish oppression but has served as an excuse for anti-Semitism. It is time for Jews to attempt a thorough critique not only of our economic arrangements, but of the authoritarian, patriarchal culture that has produced Jews and anti-Semites, capitalism and socialism.

It is my impression that the Andrew Young affair and Carter's Middle East policy have stimulated a good deal of political ferment among Jews. At this point, I would not venture to guess how it will affect the 1980 campaign. But to respond to the spirit of the question—is the Jewish community about to move to the Right?—I see no evidence of such a trend. The liberal and radical Jews I know have been discussing how best to affirm our commitment to social change, racial equality, and a just Middle East settlement while condemning left-wing anti-Semitism, including the villainization of Israel. We share the hope that if we argue our position we will find allies on the Left, for the simple reason that anti-Semitism benefits no one but the people in power.

ELLEN WILLIS *is a staff writer for the* Village Voice.

Ruth R. Wisse: "Tolstoy says, man uses the axe to shape the handle of the axe; but I say, man uses the axe to chop off heads" (Sholom Aleichem).

This corrective aphorism from one of our jollier Jews reminds us that this is not the first time in recent history that the Jew's faith in liberalism has been shaken by the evidence of his senses. Fellow standard bearers in the struggle for liberty and equality have often enough turned illiberal and anti-Semitic, and idealistic libertarian slogans have been perverted—always in the name of even greater idealism—to mean exactly their opposite. If the Jews were to learn from their history, they would be the most cynical people on earth. That they are not is surely a bit of unacknowledged evidence of their lingering attendance upon God.

Of course you don't have to be Jewish to worry about the changing face of American liberalism. The apparent readiness of "good people" to replace good laws by bad-laws-with-good-intentions is disturbing to all liberals who trust the staying power of good laws more than they do the zeal of good intentions. The diminishing enthusiasm for Israel and concomitant sympathy for the PLO seem symptomatic of a diminished enthusiasm for democracy in general. When the "honesty" of absolutism and butchery becomes more attractive than the complexities of negotiated democracy, liberalism is clearly in decline, by whatever name it may call itself. As for the patronizing liberals who will not hold others accountable for the same degree of civility they expect of themselves, cowardice is the least of their sins. Anyone who respects the blacks would wish for them a better and —I believe—more representative leadership than some of the opportunists who have recently spoken in their name.

The softening of American liberalism affects me, as a Jew, with particular urgency, first, because of the political isolation of Israel, which is thereby increased; second, because of the untried nature of American Jewry, which has grown unaccustomed to the adversary role it may now have to assume.

The isolation of Israel became shockingly apparent during the blockade of May 1967. It went on permanent record in the United Nations resolution equating Zionism with racism, than which no anti-Jewish utterance was ever more evil or incendiary. It is continually reinforced by the anti-Semitism of the Soviet Union, by the growing pressure of OPEC, and by the politics of appeasement now characteristic of much of Western Europe. All this leaves Israel extraordinarily dependent on the United States, through no fault of either country, and somewhat to the discomfort of each. But in this bond between unequals, Israel fares worse. The historian Salo Baron once noted that "In the arena of power politics no greater misfortune can befall a group than being taken for granted." As a client state with few alternative suppliers, Israel is not far from that misfortune.

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To some small degree, American Jews have tried to provide Israel with the leverage it lacks and cannot easily regain. Their political support, strongly tied to guarantees for Israel, cannot be taken for granted, but must be wooed to be won. During the McGovern candidacy, when the Democrats for the first time were weaker in their commitment to Israel than the Republican-party platform, many liberal Jews anticipated the questions of this symposium and voted, with whatever misgivings, on this point of overriding concern. John Connally's unambiguous endorsement of OPEC suggests that bad as things were, they may still grow worse. The presence of a strong, pro-Israel stand is no longer guaranteed in either party, whether as a moral imperative or a political offering. Much still depends on the willingness of Jews to associate themselves forcefully with the security of Israel, but this is no longer enough. If the trend of waning support is to be reversed, the legitimacy and importance of Israel will have to be interpreted to a new generation of doubters and to the disinterested. Almost as in the days before the creation of the state of Israel, a new pro-Zionist coalition will have to be forged.

THE nice thing about the convergence of the Jewish and liberal agendas in the past was that Jews did not have to appear to be acting in their own self-interest, or to be acting, for that matter, as Jews. In their own minds and in the public eye, their liberalism so neatly transcended their Judaism that no parochial considerations were discernible.

With the divergence of the two, the Jewish agenda becomes exposed as a response to one's own people over and above (though never in place of) humanity at large. Jewish liberalism begins with the challenge of Cain to *be* one's brother's keeper. But who can bear the embarrassment of particularism so frankly acknowledged? Not, as we know from experience, the most "liberal" of the liberals; with that inversion of priorities so characteristic of Jewish universalists, they will be the most vociferous in demanding justice for others and injustice for themselves. Other Jews are simply oblivious to political urgencies of any kind, including those of their presumed "community." They are probably out there right now recycling newspapers and practicing yoga.

What remains in question is the spirit of affiliated Jews who have enjoyed several decades of political popularity and do not relish a return to either the anti-Semitism or the uphill Zionist struggles of the 1930's. Jews want to be liked, to do good, to be "in." Nevertheless, unlike the German Jews to whom they are often compared, most American Jews do not seem to be uncomfortable within their Jewish fate. Born and bred in America, they are convinced by its guarantees of liberty. They may not draw upon great reserves of tradition or knowledge, they may lack an inspired leadership and even a passable intelligentsia, but they do boast a certain obvious self-confidence. Paradoxically, the readiness of these confirmed Jews to stand up for their vision of justice and for their own brothers as well as the Brotherhood of Man, may also be their highest tribute to America, and to the liberal faith in which so many were raised. If they are successful, they might even help restore unto liberalism its former good name.

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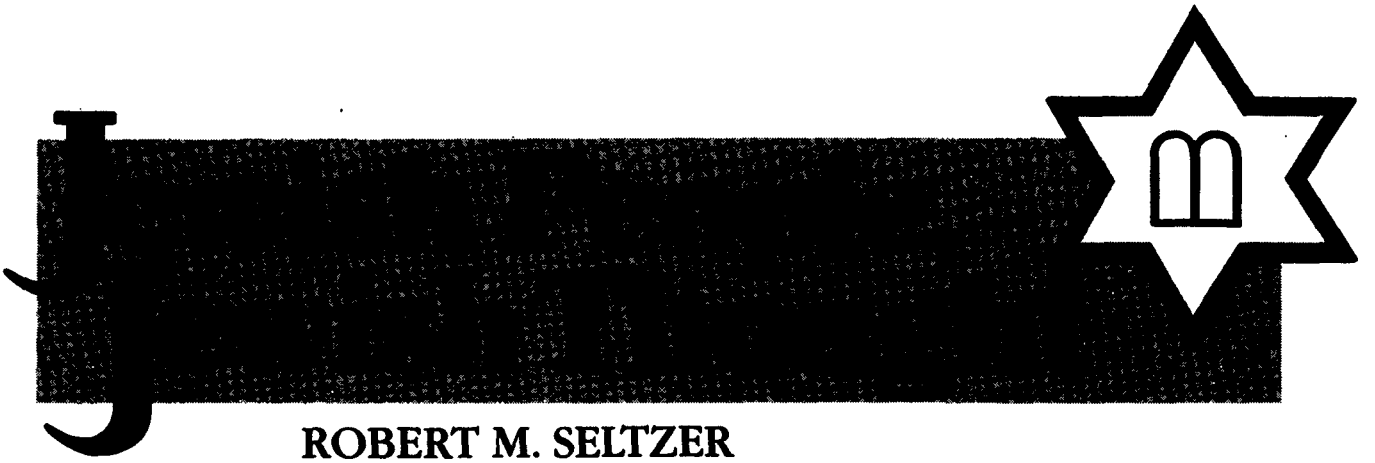

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Reviewed by MICHAEL LEDEEN

THOMAS POWERS has written a serious book about the CIA and one of its major figures, a book that is significant despite its author's inability to overcome fully the accumulated prejudice of a decade of unrestrained accusation—now revealed as very largely unfounded. Unlike other celebrated "exposés" of the Agency in the recent past, *The Man Who Kept the Secrets* is a balanced work, written with care and maturity. If it is finally not successful, it nevertheless does get us halfway back to rationality on the subject of this country's intelligence service. Would that halfway were far enough.

Powers tells us a great deal about the politics of the CIA, and he puts to rest one of the most widespread canards: that the Agency was for some time a "rogue elephant" out of control, creating its own foreign policy often contrary to the desires of the Presidents themselves. This is false. The CIA, in fact, has scrupulously carried out the wishes of the Presidents on all occasions. (Indeed, as Powers rightly stresses, one of the Agency's most common sins has been that of *failing* to resist the executive branch's worst instincts.) The point must be underlined because for many years some writers and critics have encouraged the belief that by its very nature a secret organization threatens "the system," undermines democracy, and leads unerringly to evil. Powers effectively demolishes this demonology and focuses our attention where it belongs: on the ideology and conduct of the President and his colleagues in the executive branch.

As Powers acknowledges, the Agency is and must be a unique instrument, not only because of its relationship with the President, but because it is a secret organization. As such it gives—or used to give—the country the ability to exert power in cases where military force is too clumsy, too obvious, or inappropriate to the problem at hand (such as Iran after the taking of the hostages). In addition, the CIA enables the President to obtain information that might otherwise be unavailable, either because sources are unwilling to provide it openly or because the information in question is held by hostile powers who would never give it up voluntarily.

Although he grants the need for an intelligence service, Powers is nevertheless ambivalent about the CIA. His attitude is perhaps best illustrated by a long footnote in which he writes of his investigation of the widespread charge that the CIA assassinated American agents who caused trouble:

> . . . I was at first inclined to accept the general wisdom that the CIA, like other intelligence services, occasionally kills people if they cause sufficient trouble, and if their murder can be carried out secretly. When I said as much in an earlier version of this manuscript, CIA people reacted so vigorously I had no choice but to reconsider the whole matter. In the end I accepted their denials of low-level agent killings for two reasons. First, I was unable to discover so much as a single example of the sort of murder referred to here. It hardly seemed fair to charge the CIA with routine homicide in the total absence of evidence. Second, I began to wonder about my own point of view. Was I so hostile toward the Agency that I actually preferred to believe the worst?

One is entitled to ask how such a claim crept into an earlier version of the manuscript when, by Powers's own account, there was absolutely no evidence to substantiate it. Similar flaws abound in this book, showing how next-to-impossible it is for some people to approach the subject of the CIA with an open mind. Any money passed secretly from the CIA to individuals or groups overseas is invariably labeled "corrupting." Aid to individuals is always a "bribe," even though Powers rightly notes that a good deal of CIA money went to support democratic forces involved in a life-and-death struggle against totalitarianism.

This sort of distortion is the result of a fundamental shortcoming of *The Man Who Kept the Secrets*: the absence of a picture of international reality that could explain the motivation of Presidents who kept using the CIA in ways Powers finds dubious or objectionable. For although we hear about the Soviet Union and the KGB from time to time, there is never any account of what it was the Russians were doing that so alarmed successive administrations. Since he does not look at CIA actions in the context in which they belong, the context of the Soviet challenge to America, he cannot evaluate their effectiveness or their propriety.

To take only one case: at the end of World War II the American government learned that the Communist party of Italy was maintaining a clandestine army, trained by Soviet advisers. Italian officials ceaselessly warned that their country might fall victim to an armed coup d'état. What should the American response have been? Some Americans advocated the use of remnants of the U.S. army still stationed in Western Europe. Others urged a program of military aid, conducted under cover of the Marshall Plan. This was the plan eventually adopted. Could such a program be termed "the injection of corrupting sums of money into the political systems of other nations"? Powers's analysis does not

MICHAEL LEDEEN *is executive editor of the* Washington Quarterly.

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permit us to answer such a question meaningfully.

Powers does know that the struggle against the Soviet Union is at the heart of presidential (and therefore Agency) policy, but almost every time he discusses the matter he leaves out the Soviet side of the story. Thus we are told that the extreme suspicion of the USSR evinced by former counterintelligence chief James Jesus Angleton was the result of "the fundamental error of thinking national governments have a capacity for extreme intrigue like that which in fact characterizes intelligence services." Yet, as Angleton knew, the Russians *had* this capacity, for he could document many cases in which the Soviet government had acted with a cunning entirely ruthless, and had even sacrificed thousands of Soviet soldiers in wartime to advance an agent who had penetrated the military intelligence of the enemy country. Powers himself refers to a somewhat similar case in Poland shortly after the war, but does not draw the obvious conclusion that the Soviet Union is capable of carrying out extreme intrigue over a period of many years, and has a capacity for systematic deception that is remarkable both for its cleverness and for its thoroughness.

SUCH failures to understand the world extend to the craft of intelligence as well. For despite the wealth of information, and the many pages of reflections on the nature of the CIA, Powers makes errors of fact, is a poor analyst of character, and simply cannot figure out the real motives of intelligence officials. The most obvious example concerns the book's main figure, Richard Helms. Powers evidently began work on the book expecting to find in Helms one of the chief devils of the postwar era. Instead he found a gentleman, a patriot, and a professional in the best sense of the term. Powers is unable to reconcile the two impressions because he sees everything in terms of personality or of narrowly institutional interests and does not understand the nature of the tasks Helms was attempting to fulfill.

In dealing with the steadfast refusal of Helms to break his oath and reveal his secrets to Congress and the press, Powers offers three explanations: first, that Helms would have been personally damaged by such revelations (and might even have had to face criminal proceedings); second, that the revelations would have undermined the reputation of the CIA, and destroyed "the complacent trust in the Agency's honor and good sense without which it could have no freedom of action"; finally, that the "dark" side of the CIA—that side of the Agency that actually "did things" as opposed to merely gathering information and analyzing problems—had to maintain its "secrets of methods and its secrets of essence." These last, according to Powers, were initiatives that

> had to be hidden so that their effect would appear genuine and spontaneous, rather than contrived. If a foreign leader is known to be on the CIA's payroll he ceases to be a leader, but is discredited as a kept man. Who would be impressed by the anti-Communism of a newspaper which could not publish without CIA funds? If it was the CIA which ousted Arbenz, then it could not have been the doing of Guatemalans. Who was most opposed to the Communists in Italy —the Italians or the CIA?

Helms, however, knew more about the way the world works than does Thomas Powers. Helms knew, for example, that there were (and are) many countries in which anti-Communist newspapers could not publish without money from outside, and that such money meant only that the newspapers would appear, not that their editors were any less sincerely anti-Communist for accepting help. He also knew that countries like Italy and Guatemala were Soviet targets, where governments were being infiltrated by the KGB, anti-democratic insurrectionary forces were being trained by Soviet agents, and democratic leaders were threatened by Russian representatives. When the United States, the presumed protector of democratic forces, refuses to help such countries, the inevitable reaction is one of alarm, scorn, and finally resignation. The questions Powers asks in the passage quoted above are thus entirely the wrong ones, either for understanding the world or for comprehending the actions of Richard Helms.

THIS does not mean that the CIA always showed good judgment, or that its attempts to shore up various forces abroad were always advisable. Undoubtedly there were moments of anti-Communist hysteria, and cases in which hasty decisions were reached. But these must be analyzed in context if one is to avoid the moralistic errors that have so long plagued our publicists, and that have now hamstrung and bamboozled the Carter administration for nearly three years.

For, as the case of Richard Helms eloquently demonstrates, the "cure" for the presumed disease of the CIA has proved worse than the malady itself. In their efforts to purge the American body politic of the imagined cancer the Agency was said to be, the critics and the purifiers have struck a terrible blow at the country itself. There *was* a rogue elephant on the loose, and it ran headlong through congressional committees and national newsrooms, wrecking operations, burning agents, exposing friendly sources, and ruining the careers of public servants.

A good deal of Helms's rage at congressional committees was produced by his knowledge that every time another Agency secret was dragged before the public, it cost the United States dozens of potential sources throughout the world. Oddly, it never seems to occur to Powers that many of the Agency's information sources had to be secret or they could not inform. This was as true of friendly government officials as it was of spies in the more literal sense. But it certainly occurred to Richard Helms, who rightly foresaw that men like Frank Church and Otis Pike would inevitably force foreigners to avoid all contact with the CIA for fear of seeing their names on the front pages of the American press. The American government and its representatives everywhere in the world are still living with the consequences.

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The Reality Principle

LITERATURE AGAINST ITSELF: LITERARY IDEAS IN MODERN SOCIETY. By GERALD GRAFF. *University of Chicago Press. 260 pp. $15.00.*

Reviewed by
MICHAEL VANNOY ADAMS

TO ANYONE unfamiliar with the present depressive state of academic affairs in general, and with the current "deconstructionist" theory of literary criticism in particular, the stand taken by Gerald Graff in what he calls, in his very first sentence, "an argumentative book" must surely seem a curious irrelevance. For Graff, who is chairman of the English department at Northwestern University, here sets out to defend the simple and self-evident truth that literature refers to reality. It is a comment on the times that it should be so unusual—and therefore so necessary—for someone to mount such a defense.

Literature Against Itself in fact comes as a welcome relief from the self-reflexive and self-indulgent extremism of recent literary criticism. It is bad enough, says Graff, that literature in our society is devalued by the forces of mass consumption and mass culture; but now the forces of mind, which have the responsibility to value and revalue literature, conspire perversely to invalidate it as well. "As if our society had not rendered literature unimportant enough already," Graff writes, "literary intellectuals have collaborated in insuring its ineffectuality." They have done this, according to Graff, by their insistence that literature is a strictly conventional system of language with a certain internal coherence but no external correspondence, and by their denial that literature appeals to and makes true-or-false statements about the reality to which it refers.

"Refers" is the key word. That literature does refer to the world, that words do refer to things, may seem so obvious as to be utterly banal—but not to enthusiasts of deconstructionist literary criticism. From the assumption that literature, as a system of language, inevitably entails an arbitrary mediation of reality, the deconstructionists—the term is associated with such French figures as Jacques Derrida and Roland Barthes, and in this country with critics like Harold Bloom, Stanley E. Fish, Geoffrey Hartman, Paul de Man, J. Hillis Miller, and others—reach the conclusion that literature does not necessarily correspond or even refer indirectly to reality. The implications that follow from this, as Graff shows, extend far beyond literature and literary criticism. For if literature does not refer to reality, then reality itself does not necessarily exist as an objective entity, independent of prejudice or ideology. If reality exists only as a subjective construct, then "reality" is not a fact but a fiction. One "reality" is neither more right nor more wrong than another. Separate "realities" are merely a matter of opinion or preference. At this point, the connections between the supersophisticated new wave in literary criticism and some of the more banal and solipsistic tenets of the counterculture of the 1960's begin to become apparent.

IN *Literature Against Itself* Graff exposes the fallacy that lies at the bottom of deconstructionism—none of its conclusions about literature and/or reality follows logically from the initial premise about the mediatory function of language—and attacks the irresponsibility of those critics who have refused to recognize and honor the reality principle in literature. The greatest service that literary intellectuals and humanists could perform at the moment, Graff says, "would be to shore up the sense of reality, to preserve the distinction between the real and the fictive," and actively to resist the relativistic indiscrimination of the new critical sensibility, which, if it had its way, would reduce reality itself to a mere linguistic (or literary) fiction.

The deconstructionists render literature invalid or ineffectual by default; they deprive literature of the relevance it ought, by all rights, to have, and they reduce criticism from a serious and influential discipline to a frivolous and inconsequential—and quite expendable—exercise. Why, then, have they captured the English departments of so many universities and become so dominant on the academic landscape? Graff offers an economic explanation. He says that sheer quantity of output, not quality, is the way to tenure and promotion in the university today. For English departments to insist on a real standard of excellence in literary criticism "would be comparable to the American economy's returning to the gold standard: the effect would be the immediate collapse of the system"—the academic system depending as it does on mass production (publish-or-perish). Hence the urgency to produce new (not stricter) methods of literary criticism, which produce different (not truer) interpretations, which produce more (not better) publications. According to Graff, the deconstruction of texts is make-work, a mere game that critics now play when the "explication of many authors and works seems to have reached the point of saturation."

Literature Against Itself is an admirable first try at rectifying the predicament. As good as the effort is, however, it is inadequate. Contentious in tone and controversial in intent, the book is oddly deficient in systematic analysis. What is needed now is not just an indictment of the deconstructionists' excesses but a rigorously philosophical discussion of their errors of reason, fact, and value, and a vigorously programmatic recommendation for the future course of literary criticism. Graff's book ought at least to be supplemented with Graham Martin's 1975 study, *Language, Truth, and Poetry,* which addresses itself to the same issues but is phrased in more formally disputatious terms. And it ought to be followed by an aggressive and energetic debate about the issues it so ably raises.

MICHAEL VANNOY ADAMS *teaches English at Lafayette College in Easton, Pennsylvania.*

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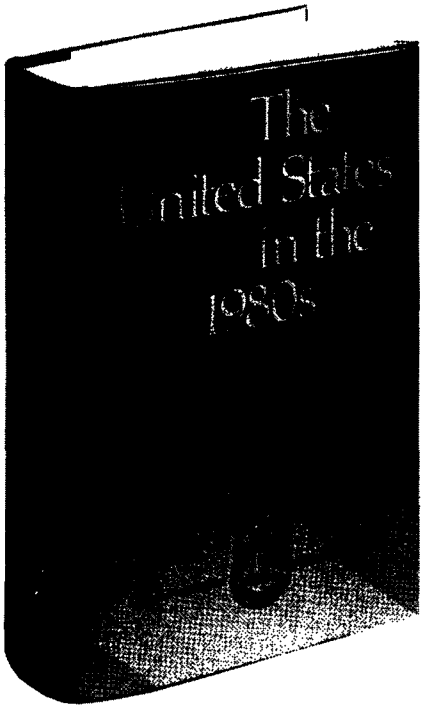

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DISTURBING THE UNIVERSE. By FREEMAN DYSON. *Harper & Row. 283 pp. $12.95.*

Reviewed by JEFFREY MARSH

THE Alfred P. Sloan Foundation is currently sponsoring a series of books intended to show the literate public how scientists' minds work by encouraging a representative selection of accomplished and articulate scientists to present themselves in their own words. While cynics may cavil that articulate scientists are by definition atypical, any attempt to demonstrate that scientists are human too can only be welcomed at a time when the heroes of popular culture seem bent on reviving the devil theory of science. In *Disturbing the Universe*, Freeman Dyson certainly succeeds in presenting a fascinating account of the mind, work, and undeniable humanity of one scientist, but his particular experience and highly individualistic world view are not exactly representative of scientists in general.

Dyson, an Englishman who is a permanent member of the stellar Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton, achieved professional eminence at an early age for his pathbreaking work in the esoteric and highly mathematical area of quantum electrodynamics. Much of his career, however, has been spent far afield from mathematical physics, in such diverse activities as designing nuclear rockets, speculating on extraterrestrial life, and studying Soviet strategic thought. This book might best be described as an intellectual autobiography, as it presents Dyson's personal reflections on these subjects and more, as well as on his colleagues and family, and on society at large.

The book proceeds in a roughly chronological fashion. Dyson was born in 1923, and he begins by describing a favorite children's book, E. Nisbet's fantasy, *The Magic City*, which pictures a world where the machines dominate the people. This theme, adumbrated in 1910, clearly prefigures the concern with technology so apparent today, and is as compelling an analogy as is the Faust legend to which Dyson's mother exposed him in adolescence; both visions have haunted him ever since. As an adolescent, Dyson was fascinated with mathematics, and he describes how he spent an entire school vacation at age fourteen or fifteen working through a book on differential equations so that he could become adept at the basic technique needed to become a physicist.

The ecstasy of mathematics was accompanied by the agony of the approaching war. Like other sensitive adolescents, Dyson became a convinced pacifist, and, like most, he compromised his principles when called to serve. Unlike those less mathematically gifted, however, he served in a civilian capacity, on the operational research staff of the RAF's Bomber Command. In an environment where his contemporaries serving on active duty were flying out every day on suicidal bomber missions (only 30 per cent of the crew members could expect to complete a single tour of duty), while standard bureaucratic operating procedures guaranteed that any proposed methods of reducing bomber losses had little chance of being implemented, it is no wonder that Dyson soon developed a strong case of survivor guilt, which he has still not exorcised. His feelings of impotence soon combined with remorse at the idea of bombing the civilian German population, and he began to identify with "the technicians on the other side who were helping the German night-fighter crews to defend their homes and families. . . . They ended the war morally undefeated. . . . We had given them at the end of the war the one thing that they lacked at the beginning, a clean cause to fight for." Some years later, he was to marry a survivor, a German woman who as a child had lived in Berlin under the Allied bombing.

Among those who did not survive the war was Frank Thompson, a slightly older schoolmate. A gifted linguist, Thompson had, in

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the fashion of the 30's, become a Communist in his school days, and his wartime British Army mission was to serve with the Bulgarian partisans. Captured by the Germans, Thompson astonished all present at his trial by making a rousing patriotic speech, in fluent Bulgarian, and died giving a clenched-fist salute. Dyson writes that while "it may be difficult, 30 years later, to find much evidence for this spirit [of justice and liberty] in the bureaucrats who are now running the government in Sofia . . . the mere fact that [the partisans] fought and died in this spirit gives a lasting historical legitimacy to the government they established." This spirit, he feels, was also present among Ho Chi Minh's forces in Vietnam, which is why Dyson decided that "when the American bombers began bombing in Vietnam . . . our cause was hopeless."

While one can understand that an adolescent would feel this way, it is difficult to accept such sentiments in a mature man. The Bulgarian government was established by Stalin himself, whose heirs run the Stalinist regime of today's Vietnam. Where is the moral advantage of that regime over the flourishing democracies of West Germany and Japan, countries reduced to rubble by bombing?

AFTER the war, Dyson resumed the study of physics. In 1947, he came to Cornell, where Hans Bethe had returned from Los Alamos, bringing with him a number of the gifted team of young theoreticians who had worked on the Manhattan Project. Dyson became very friendly with the most brilliant of them, Richard Feynman, who had developed a pictorial shortcut to making the elaborate calculations necessary to describe the interactions of matter and radiation. The problem dealt with by Feynman had been solved in a much more formal way by Julian Schwinger of Harvard and, they were astonished to discover, by Shi Ito Tomonaga, isolated in wartime Tokyo, but the approaches taken by the latter two were dramatically different from Feynman's. Traveling across the continent with Feynman, Dyson

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talked at length about life, about science, and most of all about quantum electrodynamics. At summer school in Ann Arbor, Dyson heard Schwinger expound his theory, and absorbed it with the voracity he had shown for differential equations as a teenager. By the time Dyson arrived to take up a visiting fellowship at the Institute for Advanced Study, he had seen that the different approaches merely represented differences in perspective, and had developed a unified theory.

The director of the Institute, J. Robert Oppenheimer, was decidedly cool to both approaches to quantum electrodynamics. After an intellectual battle lasting through three seminars, Oppenheimer began to come around. After two more seminars he offered Dyson, at the age of twenty-four, a long-term appointment to the Institute. Though he does not mention it in his book, Dyson had never bothered to get a Ph.D.

IN physics and mathematics, great achievements are often made at an early age, following which the young lion fits into his particular niche of the establishment, contributing both to his field and, typically of the accomplished physicist whose underlying physical intuition and mathematical facility are readily transferable, to other fields. As an emerging leader in his profession, he is more or less rapidly involved in a variety of activities on the boundary between science and society, serving on committees and having his advice sought on a broad range of scientific and technological activities, often related to national security. Dyson's career can be characterized in these terms also, except that his progress in advancing fundamental physical theory in depth did not achieve what Oppenheimer thought him capable of, and his outside interests were more broadly gauged than is usually the case.

In 1955, following a meeting in Geneva where the spirit of détente first appeared among scientists from East and West, Dyson was invited by Frederic de Hoffman, a physicist working for General Dynamics, to join a group set up to design commercial reactors. An intensive summer sesssion was capped by a decision to go ahead with the design of a small reactor for training, research, and medical purposes. This reactor was to be totally safe, so safe that even if an attempt were made deliberately to put it out of commission by removing the control rods entirely, no harm could result. In short order the efforts of the design group, which was led by Edward Teller, were crowned with success. Within three years, the first TRIGA reactors were built, licensed, and sold; they represent one of the few total success stories of commercial reactor design. Unfortunately, Dyson does not note that it was just such a safe TRIGA reactor which aroused intense opposition when it was purchased by Columbia University; one of the first results of the accident at Three Mile Island this year was to persuade the Columbia administration finally to surrender to the clamor of the anti-nuclear zealots.

In connection with the TRIGA story, Dyson discusses the reasons that nuclear power has not fulfilled its early and much heralded promise. In contrast to the prevailing concentration on issues such as reactor safety, waste disposal, and nuclear proliferation, Dyson holds that "the fundamental problem of the industry is that nobody any longer has any fun building reactors." Translating this unique theory into less flamboyant language, he explains that there is an insufficient diversity of designs to insure that the best ones emerge. He ends on the upbeat note that when the need is great enough, the technology will be developed.

The TRIGA design was not the most innovative project with which Dyson was involved in the 1950's. He spent a year working with Theodore Taylor on the concept of a rocket which would propel itself by means of a series of small nuclear explosions. Ultimately, the prohibition of nuclear explosions in space under the 1963 test-ban treaty forced Project Orion to be cancelled, but Dyson still believes that it would have worked. He now believes also, however, that the nuclear rocket would have left behind unacceptable levels of radioactivity.

Dyson maintains great enthusiasm for the concept of space flight, preferably carried out by techniques superior to the present, chemically-fueled rockets. The characteristic approach of the physicist to any problem first of all involves quantification, and Dyson provides a chapter expounding on the economics of space exploration. On the issue of practicality, he computes the equivalent present-day cost of the expeditions of the Pilgrim fathers and of Brigham Young's Mormons, and uses these to establish acceptable costs for space colonization and then to describe how it may be accomplished technologically. His preferred approach involves colonizing the asteroids which dot the solar system.

BACK to earth, in the late 50's and early 60's Dyson was actively involved in political battles against a nuclear test ban (he subsequently changed his opinion) and for the establishment of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency. As an ACDA consultant, he immersed himself in the study of Soviet nuclear strategy, in which endeavor he was aided by his fluent reading knowledge of Russian, a legacy of his adolescent mentor, Frank Thompson. In sharp disagreement with the conventional wisdom, Dyson is a disbeliever in the doctrine of "mutual assured destruction," being an advocate instead of what is known in strategic circles as "defensive emphasis." He supports the development of defensive weapons of all types, including ABM systems, which were of course banned under the terms of the SALT I agreements. He does not make any reference in his book to SALT II, but should logically be opposed to the proposed treaty, which takes the U.S. strategic position even further down the road of stressing offense over defense, while making the destruction of the U.S. even more assured than that of the Soviet Union.

In the late 60's and 70's, Dyson continued to be buffeted by the *Zeitgeist* in unpredictable ways. In a living-out of one of his wartime nightmares, he was present and unable to help when a radical's gasoline bomb incinerated the care-

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taker of a University of California faculty club where he was staying. He was involved, again with Theodore Taylor, in discussions with *New Yorker* writer John McPhee over the propriety of widely publicizing Taylor's fears of nuclear proliferation. Later, he served as faculty adviser to John Phillips, the Princeton undergraduate who achieved fame for designing an atomic bomb using only publicly available information. Dyson points out that while Phillips had indeed acquired a startling amount of information, he had not really designed a working bomb, a fact which neither the news media nor Phillips himself have taken pains to expose. That Phillips has subsequently used his credentials as a bomb designer to attack nuclear power is a point Dyson does not mention.

IN the final section of the book Dyson allows his mind to wander even more freely. He reflects on the relation between the past and the future, the burden of his remarks echoing C. P. Snow's famous (and unproved) dictum that scientists have the future in their bones. This leads him to offer some visions of the future of the type most commonly found in science fiction. Dyson describes a truly post-industrial society based on robot labor and a highly advanced civilization able to manipulate the resources not merely of a whole planet but those of a star and ultimately even a galaxy. He draws correlations between cultural and biological evolution, and suggests by analogy that successful societies will allow the greatest degree of flexibility to individuals and small groups.

Dyson indulges in a facile classification of the world and its works into two opposing styles, which he terms gray and green. "Factories are gray, gardens are green. Physics is gray, biology is green. Plutonium is gray, horse manure is green. . . . Army field manuals are gray, poems are green." While it is clear where his sympathies lie (though one wonders about the horse manure), Dyson recognizes, unlike so many of the critics of conventional technology, that alternative technologies are still much more expensive, and that the gray way is going to be for some time to come the only way to help mankind meet its basic material needs.

Disturbing the Universe concludes with three intensely personal chapters. One recounts a visit by Dyson to his son George, who lives in the Canadian wilds, and of whose somewhat recondite skills in dealing with nature in the raw Dyson is inordinately proud. The penultimate chapter deals with the nature of the cosmos and the relationship between mind and physical reality, and is presumably distinct from what Dyson has earlier described as the "magical

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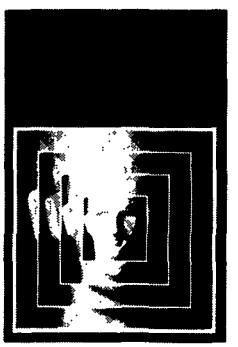

The Politicization of Society

Edited by Kenneth S. Templeton, Jr.

"The state has increasingly replaced the church in determining how we should behave," writes Oxford professor R. M. Hartwell in his introduction. "Politics is now religion." Fourteen scholars examine the central problem of modern society—the growth of the state—and its significance for the individual. They are Robert L. Carneiro, Felix Morley, Murray N. Rothbard, William Marina, Robert A. Nisbet, Jacques Ellul, Giovanni Sartori, Michael Oakeshott, Donald M. Dozer, Herbert Butterfield, John A. Lukacs, Jonathan R. T. Hughes, Butler D. Shaffer, and F. A. Hayek. Hardcover $10.00, Paperback $4.50.

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mumbo jumbo" that Isaac Newton regarded as his main intellectual endeavor, to which the exploration of physics was secondary. The concluding chapter describes a dream Dyson once had in an Israeli hotel room, in which he was invited to heaven and found the divine throne occupied by an infant.

CLEARLY, Freeman Dyson is no typical physicist. The creativity which in more conventional scientists is focused on going continually deeper into one subject has in his case been used largely to reconcile what others would regard as opposites. This is most clearly shown in his seminal achievement, the unification of the opposing approaches to quantum electrodynamics, but the urge to reconciliation seems also to be the driving force of his personality. We see it in his reactions to his wartime experience; in his simultaneous warm personal relationships with both Oppenheimer and Teller; in his desire to foster as many options as possible both for technologies and ways of life; in his endorsement of his son's primitive style of life as a suitable training for the future conquest of space.

A psychohistorian would trace to Dyson's childhood the source of this urge to reconciliation. Yet one feels that the Duke of Wellington, who knew that the battle of Waterloo was won on the playing fields of Eton, would have a simpler explanation. Not only as a pupil but also as the son of a teacher, Dyson was powerfully influenced by his schooling at Winchester, the most intellectually aristocratic of the English public schools. His desire to embrace all sides of all issues might be regarded as a working out of the motto of the school's founder, William of Wykeham: manners maketh man.

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Sideshow is the first full-scale investigation of America's secret war in Cambodia—a war that was regarded as something of a "sideshow" to Vietnam.

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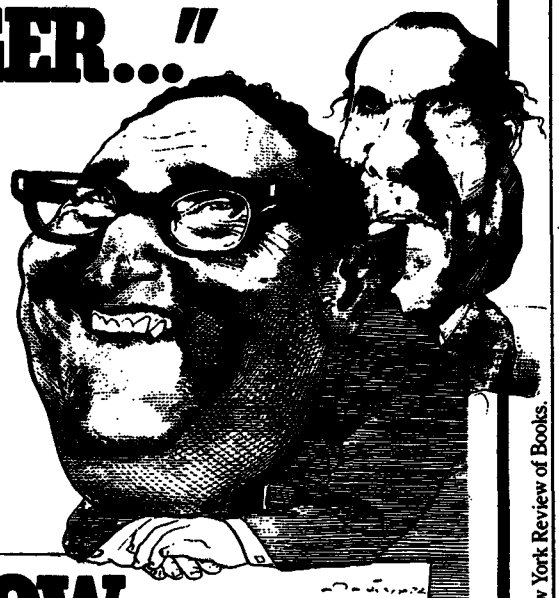

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Strategy and Survival

ENDGAME: THE INSIDE STORY OF SALT II. By STROBE TALBOTT. *Harper & Row. 319 pp. $15.00.*

Reviewed by CHARLES HORNER

A QUARTER of a century ago, the prospect of nuclear annihilation was a subject of imaginative fiction and gloomy public forums. Though worth taking seriously, it was an issue easily given to the striking of poses, existential and otherwise. But now it is no longer fashionable to worry about this man-made doom. We have, to borrow from the subtitle of Stanley Kubrick's *Dr. Strangelove*, learned to stop worrying about—if not yet to love—the bomb.

Ironically, the prospect of nuclear destruction was far more remote twenty-five years ago than it is today. Nuclear arsenals were measured then in the hundreds of warheads. At the time of the Cuban crisis, for example, the Soviets had fewer than a hundred missiles that could have struck the United States, and the United States had the capacity to eliminate those in a first strike; today, those arsenals number in the thousands. Even so, what we had then, and earlier, was a remarkable sense of our own vulnerability; there were air-raid drills and civil-defense programs. But in less than a decade, grade-school children who had been trained to duck under their desks to secure even that limited degree of protection from nuclear attack were being instructed in the universities that a defense against incoming enemy airplanes and, especially, missiles, ought not even to be attempted—lest the very effort to defend oneself be construed as a hostile act toward someone who might be contemplating such an attack.

The development of this particular argument is in fact the history of the SALT talks; everything that has happened since is an elaboration of details and an extended

CHARLES HORNER *is a specialist in international affairs. His review of William Shawcross's* Sideshow *appeared in our August issue.*

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commentary—including the trivialization of our old concern that we might well indeed be incinerated in a nuclear war, a trivialization which began when "nuclear anxiety" became the property of those American bureaucrats and "defense intellectuals" who have managed the "SALT process" since the late 1960's. For the first response to the nuclear era was visceral and instinctive; the SALT response has been abstract, bloodless, wholly at variance with the human instinct for self-preservation. Indeed, to read Strobe Talbott's book, an excellent book in many respects, is to marvel at how the twin concerns of strategy and survival have fared among custodians absorbed in bureaucratic processes calculated in a bizarre nuclear arithmetic.

Talbott's subject is the SALT negotiations under the Carter administration. *Endgame* is not a "diplomatic history," for it rests not upon the examination of documents but upon the interviewing of "sources" and "players." Talbott takes us into closed meetings, summarizes the contents of various position papers and proposals, recounts the telephone conversations of important "principals," and thereby creates an account more dramatic than analytical. For SALT is public theater or, better, a political soap opera played out in installments, wherein various heroes "clinch" an agreement even as it appears to have been lost. In this, Talbott in no way seems to misrepresent the situation. A skilled diplomatic reporter for *Time*, well-educated in Soviet affairs, he describes in this book what is obviously the American "players'" own self-image. (Given the nature of Soviet society, he can have no Soviet counterpart; the Soviet view of this now well-established "process" remains unknown.)

WHAT, then, is SALT about? It is principally about an *idea*, one of the most powerful and significant to appear in our culture in the past thirty years, but one almost wholly unknown. It is the idea of "nuclear deterrence," or "assured destruction," or "mutual assured destruction" (MAD), as the notion is described by its detractors. According to this theory, nuclear war can be avoided if the possible participants in it, presumed to be rational, can be convinced of its futility. And if they wish to avoid such a war, though they are yet unwilling to do away with their nuclear weapons altogether, they should at least be persuaded to limit themselves to forces which, by their very use, would make a nuclear war "unwinnable." These ideas, originated by Americans, surely represent a form of self-denial; they are the ideas of a country which seeks to avoid a nuclear war, not to advance its aims through one.

American deterrence theory suggests two requirements for the achievement of nuclear "stability." The first is that the populations of each adversary country remain undefended, that they be given as hostages against the good behavior of their government in striking at the enemy. The second requirement is that the nuclear forces themselves be made invulnerable to attack. If one country is unable to "preempt" the nuclear forces of the enemy, it becomes pointless to initiate hostilities—especially when one's own people are wholly vulnerable to a counterblow.

The SALT I negotiations began in 1969 to make this paradigm a permanent feature of Soviet-American relations. In 1972, the bargaining produced a two-part agreement —a permanent treaty that effectively eliminated anti-missile defenses, and a five-year interim agreement on offensive weapons designed to expire in 1977, the substance of which would form the basis for the next round of the negotiations. When Talbott's account begins, three years of negotiation had not yet produced a new agreement on offensive arms. The new pact would not be signed until June of 1979, and by then it had

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become a second interim agreement designed to expire in 1985, not the long-term agreement for offensive weapons that had been promised in 1972.

THAT it took almost seven years to produce SALT II is, according to the conventional wisdom, a sign that the issues are many and complex. And yet, in 1972, it was argued that *the* issue had been settled. Soviet assent to the treaty precluding defense, it was suggested at the time, meant that the Soviets had finally accepted our paradigm. But if this were so, an agreement on offensive forces would surely have been easy to achieve. Instead, the Russians continued their build-up of nuclear forces, and the United States, having made its maximum effort in the mid-1960's while hoping that SALT would foreclose another "round" in the "arms race," did little—then finally felt obliged to announce plans of its own.

Shortly after the SALT II treaty was presented to the Senate for ratification last summer, President Carter announced that we would build and deploy the most costly missile system in our history. It is to be a system with the ability to destroy the land-based missiles of the Soviet Union—just the sort of weapon the United States had long judged "threatening" and "destabilizing." It represents, in short, a denial of our own paradigm of SALT. Indeed, the administration now argues that a virtue of the agreement it has negotiated is precisely that it allows the deployment of such a missile. But as with the Trident and B-1 that were promised as a consequence of SALT I—the Trident was delayed and the B-1 cancelled—it has come to seem increasingly unlikely that the political environment will tolerate the construction of the new MX missile system.

WAS this outcome inevitable? The central event Talbott describes is Secretary Vance's mission to Moscow in March 1977. He carried with him a far-reaching American proposal which would have mandated reductions of some 30 per cent in strategic striking power, together with various restraints on the improvement of missiles. The Soviets rejected the proposal out of hand, then bitterly denounced it. The Vance mission returned dejected, and the "players" in Washington set about blaming each other for the "debacle." In two months, the United States had a new proposal to offer which accepted the "fact" that the Soviets were not interested in reducing strategic arms. The remaining two years of the negotiations were then absorbed in detail.

Thus, instead of persisting in its proposals of March 1977, the United States first capitulated to the Soviet definition of "arms control" and then was compelled to accept as well the Soviet definition of what strategic missiles are for, namely, attacking the nuclear forces of the opponent. It therefore became necessary for the United States to acquire such a missile for itself. Our elegant strategic thinking—whether "correct" or not—had been overpowered. Abandoned by the government which purported to live by it, it is now an orphan wandering about in the arms-control seminars of our better universities.

ALL this is really a mission for American cultural historians, obviously different from the task undertaken by Talbott in his well-written account. In hindsight, it may be that we are well rid of the notion that we ought to rely for our defense on not defending ourselves. Surely, students of this era will remark upon the wholesale addiction of academic strategists, intellectuals, poets, and clergymen to a national strategic policy which relied for its "credibility" on a threat to incinerate millions of people, a threat whose execution made no strategic, political, military, or moral sense.

To read the names in Talbott's book is to be reminded that the SALT "process" these past ten years, even more than Vietnam, is above all the work of the "best and the brightest." Indeed, those responsible for the "process" may well have hoped that SALT would, in the 1970's, erase the memory of what they had wrought in the 1960's. One can hope only that future historians will not be compelled to pursue this analogy in greater, more unpleasant, detail.

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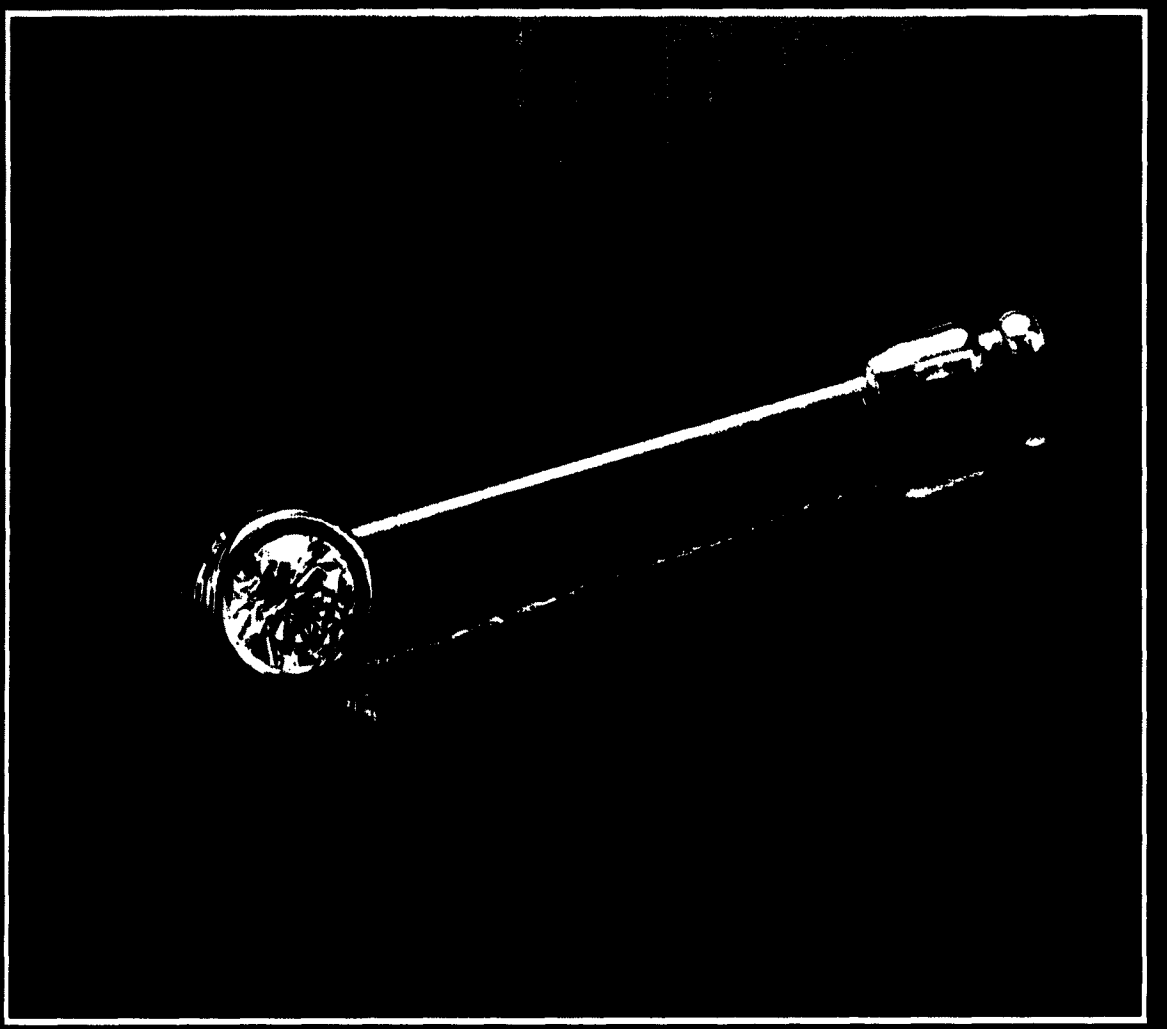

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